Chicog-Then and Now for November, 2026
JoAnn Malek

Another fact, another innovation: Wisconsin was the first state in the nation to develop Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC).

In 1998 the Department of Health Services piloted ADRCs in nine WI counties, to provide resources that would help folks age safely in their own homes. By 2013 WI ADRCs were expanded to cover all 72 counties plus 11 federally recognized Tribal Nations. The federal government used this design as a blueprint to launch a nationwide initiative.

In recent years the Washburn County ADRC has evolved from a passive information source to an active community health hub. Along with basic intake and help with Medicaid applications staff have been hired to fill specialized care roles, including dementia, elder and disability benefit specialties. Short term financial grants are sought, to provide for necessary home accessibility modifications. Besides offering access to medical appointments, transportation grants administer trips for social events to help combat isolation. Ted Hampe, ADRC Director/Aging Director, tells me that they continue to look to the future, to adapt to the needs and interests of next generations.

Chanhassen is a long way from Chicog. I couldn't help but wonder why the ADRC of Washburn County chose to travel so far for this annual fall outing. Angie Hicks, transportation coordinator, responded: "This is the trip people request. And the theater is wheel-chair accessible."

The cost of two sleek Korbussen coaches is covered by a transportation grant. Four years ago we traveled to Duluth, to enjoy dinner and an evening touring Bentleyville, with ride home guided by a full moon. Since then, Washburn County groups have been fed and entertained at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, the largest professional dinner theatre company in the US. All costumes, sets and properties are built on-site for this year-round theater, celebrating 57 years.

Rachel Nau and I boarded bus 2 in Shell Lake at 8am on Wednesday, September 9. On our arrival at Chanhassen 2-1/2 hours later, we were warmly welcomed by a theater representative. Soon we were seated at our designated table, neatly packed onto one of several tiers in a space that seats 500. I was glad that there were sturdy handrails on the many short flights of stairs.



Lunch was served at noon. Our discounted tickets included choice of a nice variety of entrees. I had not remembered that there are also many add-on possibilities, from upgraded meals to appetizers, beverages, and yummy desserts.

Guys and Dolls - A Musical Fable of Broadway - began at 1pm. It was delightful. The band in the rafters above the stage provided excellent accompaniment for the lively songs. The play's director is a noted choreographer, so it was not surprising that the dancing was spectacular. To my untrained observation, three of the singers were truly amazing.

Desserts for those who had ordered were ready to be served at the 2:30pm intermission. Everything about the crowd-handling was done smoothly and efficiently. The staff were friendly and kind.

We travelled home through city rush hour traffic. I finally reached my cabin at the cusp of darkness. I was glad that Angie had scheduled this trip early in the fall, before daylight savings time ended. It had been a long day.

The drive to Chanhassen is one many local seniors probably wouldn't attempt on their own. For some, this trip may be their biggest outing of the year. Thank you, ADRC, for making such a special adventure possible.

CHICOG HUNTERS FEED - Saturday, November 21, 5-8pm: Enjoy roast turkey/ham dinner with all the fixings, including real mashed potatoes, Betty's homemade Wisconsin cranberry sauce, and pie for dessert. Take-out meals are available. Chicog Town Hall

Do you have stories to tell about Chicog-Then?
I'd like to listen. Call or text me at (612) 250-0301.
Thank you for reading Chicog-Then and Now
Town Website: www.townofchicog.com

IMPORTANT NOVEMBER DATES
Wednesday 11/11, 6pm, monthly Chicog meeting
Wednesdays 11/11&25, Namekagon Transit Service
Thursday 11/12, 10:30-12, Bibliodragon, if repaired
Saturday 11/21, 5-8pm, Hunters Feed, town hall