



The Eagle

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2008

Company helps elderly manage life changes

By Jeremiah Tucker
Sauk Prairie Eagle

Spending time with family members over the holiday season can lead to unfortunate truths — like maybe grandma or grandpa shouldn't live alone anymore.

"You can realize they're not doing as well as you thought," Bonnie Bichl said.

And that's where Bonnie and her husband, Jeff, come in.

Earlier this year, Jeff decided to comb the Internet for a franchise he and Bonnie could run together as he prepares to retire.

After ruling out a business that catered to cleaning up after dogs, the Prairie du Sac couple decided on Caring Transitions.

The Cincinnati-based company specializes in assisting the elderly with scaling back their possessions and the headaches of moving.

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Jeff said they wanted a business "that gives back to the community and helps people."

The Bichls have completed close to 12 jobs. Most of the time, they helped senior citizens move out of their homes and into smaller apartments and assisted-living facilities.

On the job, Bonnie said they'll clean out a home, conduct estate sales or track down a lost car title.

"We basically are choreographers making sure everything is ready for the move," Bonnie said.

She said their job is to transition the person into their new home with as "little trauma and anxiety as possible."

But it isn't always easy.

"A lot of the jobs we get are people who unfortunately don't have anyone else," Bonnie said.

She said many of them were people who hoarded everything, and the Bichls have to ease them into a new, less-cluttered life. She said sometimes they have to be the bad guys.

"I've had to say 'you really don't need five different meat cleavers,'" Bonnie said.

"It's amazing what they hold onto for years and

years," Jeff said.

The couple also takes pictures and measurements in order to make the person's new place as close as possible to their old home.

So far, the company still just employs the Bichls, but Bonnie said they're enjoying it.

"When we leave at the end of the day and close that door, we know we've made that place as close to home as possible," she said.

Caring Transitions

If you need assistance with moving, downsizing or selling the estate of a senior, call Jeff or Bonnie Bichl at (608) 370-6178.