



East Central Mini Conference

Hispanic/Latino Customs/Cultures/Issues

April 29, 2005

Presented by Carol Simmons

Members of Your Communities



Members of Your Communities



Understanding Hispanic Cultural

• **Family Values**

Hispanic family is a close-knit group and the most important social unit.

- The term “*familia*” usually goes beyond the nuclear family.
- The Hispanic "family unit" includes not only parents and children but also extended family members.
- In most Hispanic families, the father is the head of the family, and the mother is responsible for the home.
- Individuals within a family have a moral responsibility to aid other members of the family experiencing financial problems, unemployment, poor health conditions, and other life issues.
- A family is a group of people who are important to each other and offer each other love and support, especially in times of crises.

Understanding Hispanic Cultural

• **Family Values**

- In order to be sensitive to the wide variety of life styles, living arrangements, and cultural variations that exist today, the family... can no longer be limited to just parent-child relationships...
- Family ties are very strong: when someone travels to another town or city or for a short visit (e.g., vacation, , medical reasons), staying with relatives or even with friends of relatives is a common practice.
- Families often gather together to celebrate holidays, birthdays, baptisms, first communions, graduations, and weddings.
- Hispanic families instill in their children the importance of:
 1. honor
 2. good manners
 3. respect for authority and the elderly
- Preserving the Spanish language within the family is a common practice in most Hispanic homes. (This is most common between the first and second generation. As the distance between the first generation is farther apart, Spanish is often lost little by little, though traditions are often more durable.)

Understanding Hispanic Cultural

Family Values

- Children are always included in celebrations such as weddings, quinceñeras, religious holidays, patriotic celebrations and other family functions.
- Children are not typically disciplined in public.
- Language between family, family friends in the second, and later generations are more often heard using “code-switching”. The terms which switch into Spanish are most common terms which show relationship (i.e. Mamá, mi hijo, mi amor etc.). If the major language spoken is Spanish, it is common for words relating to work within the Anglo community spoken in English.
- Most Hispanics tend to dress more formally when they leave their homes to go shopping or in other ways interact with the community at large. While younger third/fourth generation Hispanics most often mirror the dress of their generation.

Understanding Hispanic Cultural

• **Etiquette**

- A firm handshake is a common practice between people as greeting and for leave-taking.
- If in a group where there are individuals not well-known, Hispanics tend to be more formal and reserved in action and language.
- Most commonly you greet everyone and upon leave-taking (Even if you don't think they see you).
- It is important to not turn your back to anyone in a room. This can be quite tricky at times. But, an apology is a gracious offering when it is impossible to include all in the group.
- A hug and a light kiss on a cheek are also common greeting practices between women, and men and women who are close friends or family.
- The Spanish language provides forms of formal and non-formal address (*usted* vs. *tu* for the pronoun *you*, polite and familiar commands; titles of respect before first names such as *Don* or *Dona*).
- In non-formal settings, conversations between Spanish speakers are usually loud, fast, and adorned with animated gestures and body language to better convey points.
- Note: Eye contact is only done with peers and not adults or authority figures.

Understanding Hispanic Cultural

Family Traditions

Meal Time: When the family sits for a meal, the father and the youngest children eat first, then the mother.

Prayer of thanks to God prior to the meal

The family is reunited for conversation and health

Specific clothing for work, church, fiestas, etc.

Cultural Holidays/Traditions

December 24th, Family making tamales

Comer la rosca en el Día de Reyes

Quinceñera: A Celebration when a girl turns fifteen

Celebrate, and visit with family & friends: September 16th

Customs: Migrant

Dress in traditional clothing: September 16th

Migrant Life: Change from region to region

Changes in Schools, services etc.

Special attention to maps, transportation, weather and changes

Special attention to clothing



Values

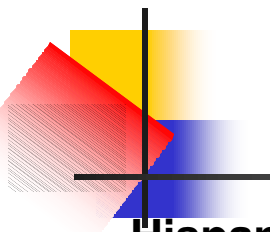
Respect
Parents and family
Teachers
Community
Friends
Materials, and environment
Life we have
Decisions
Courtesy
Patience
Honor

Literature

Stories from the Home
Stories from the Trip
Stories from the various cities/ regions
Stories from Bus Rides
Stories from Grandparents
Stories from other Family Members
Stories/ Dichos/ advice

Lessons Learned in Life/ Share with Children

Stories, dichos...
History of families
Travel stories
Anecdotes
History of Parents
Education
Work & Training
Show Love to our Children
Talk with Our Children



Times Change- Terms Change

Hispanics

Note: "What the Labels Mean"

Hispanic - all Spanish speaking people and their descendants.

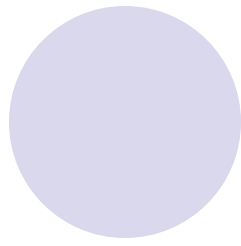
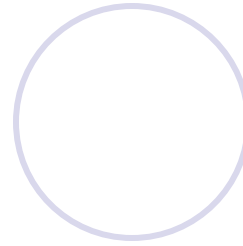
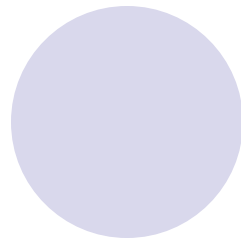
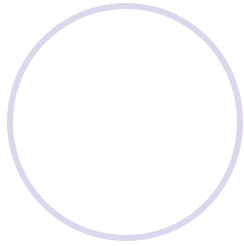
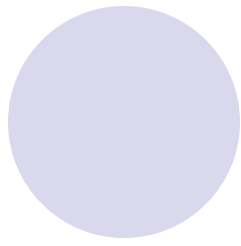
Latino - Although used by many Hispanics, technically, it would include people from all countries with Latin-based languages such as France and Italy as well as Spain and Mexico. **Mostly used by those individuals in South America, Islands around/owned by South American and Europeans.**

Chicano - A person of Mexican descent born in the United States. **Also is a political Activist. The term angers many Mexican-Americans, while honoring others**

Boriquan - A term being used by Puerto Ricans to set themselves off from other Hispanics. **Used during the 60-70's to distinguish themselves from the Dominicans in New York.**

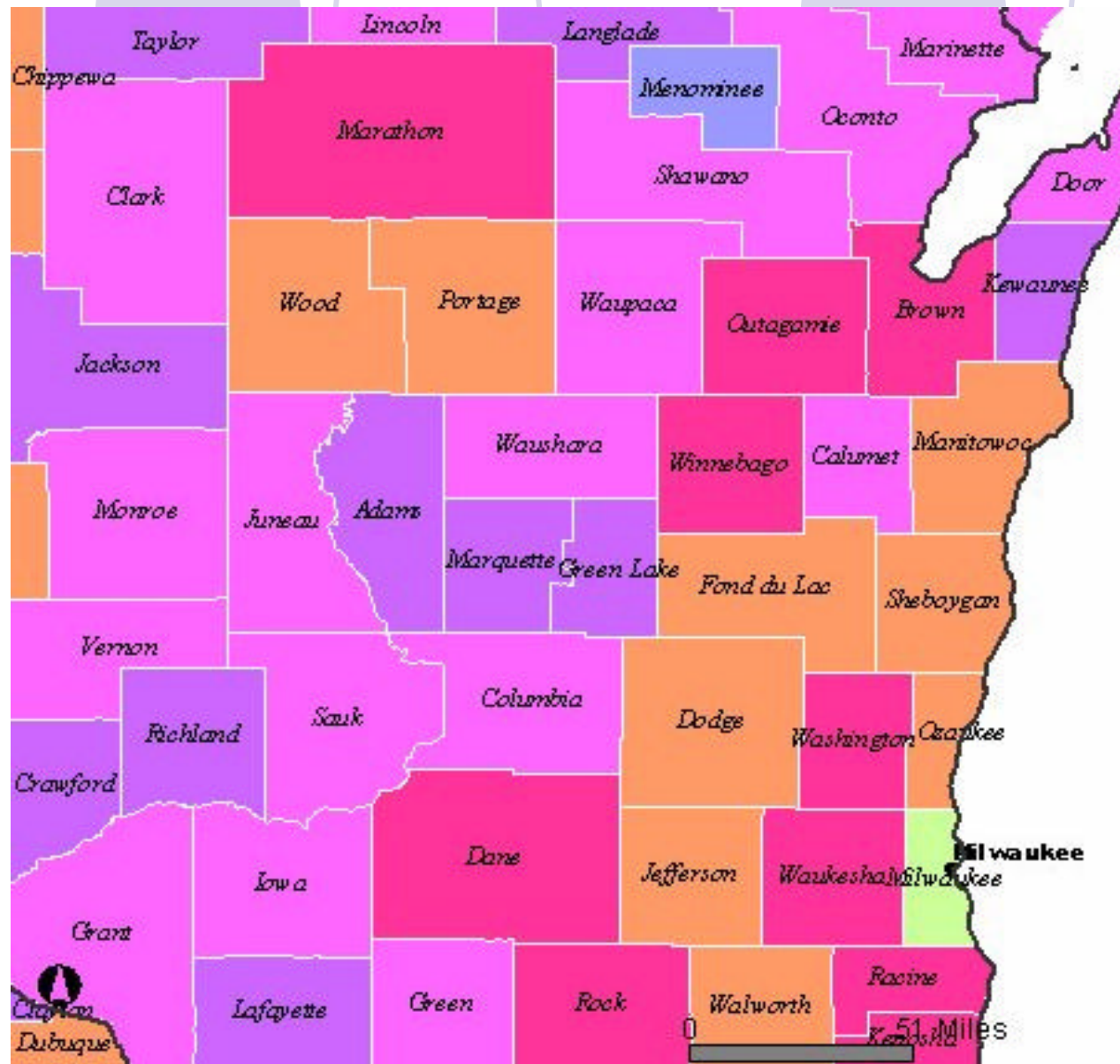
Mexican-American - Any person of Mexican descent living in the United States. **This is becoming a quite controversial term. Many prefer American without the Mexican. Many feel that this term is only appropriate if you were born in Mexico and later gained citizenship. Most Mexicans do not consider someone who was born in the USA as Mexican. This is especially so in the border states.**

Source: Milwaukee Journal July 17, 1983.

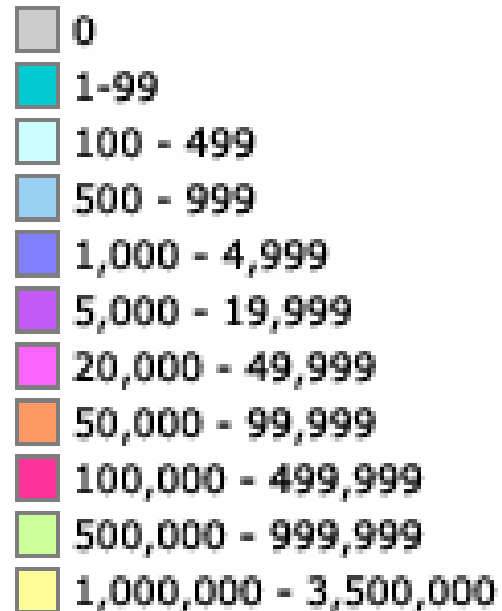


Wisconsin

Information compiled from the 2000 US Census



**Number of Speakers
(by county)**



Mexican growth in state spurs overall Hispanic increase

By MIKE JOHNSON

of the Journal Sentinel staff

Last Updated: May 10, 2001

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A surge in Wisconsin's Mexican population fueled the whopping 107% increase in the number of Hispanics in the state over the last decade, new Census 2000 figures show.

The Mexican population in Wisconsin more than doubled, to 126,719 from 57,615 - up 120% between 1990 and 2000 - and accounted for more than two-thirds of the increase in the state's Hispanic population, according to census figures.

"The growth is a combination of immigration and the fact that the birth rate for Latinos is higher than that of the rest of the population," said William Velez, a sociology professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

There are now 192,921 Hispanics in Wisconsin, up 99,727 from 93,194 in 1990.

CENSUS 2000

BREAK DOWN OF LATINO GAINS

The Mexican population in Wisconsin **increased 120% between 1990 and 2000**, accounting for more than two-thirds of the growth of the state's Hispanic population, U.S. census figures show.

ETHNICITY	2000		1990		NUMERIC CHANGE	% CHANGE
	POPULATION	% OF TOTAL	POPULATION	% OF TOTAL		
Mexican	126,719	2.40	57,615	1.18	69,104	120
Puerto Rican	30,267	0.60	19,116	0.39	11,151	58
Cuban	2,491	0.05	1,679	0.03	812	48
Other Hispanic	33,444	0.60	14,784	0.30	18,660	126
Total Hispanic	192,921	3.60	93,194	1.91	99,727	107
Total Wisconsin	5,363,675		4,891,769		471,906	9.60



The influx of Mexicans and other Hispanics is being driven by the need for workers in the manufacturing and services industries, Velez said.

"We basically have a very good economy," Velez said. Maria Monreal-Cameron, president and CEO of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, said employers in the area have been recruiting Mexican workers.

"They find Mexicans to be dependable, loyal and responsible. Wisconsin certainly has a large variety of blue-collar posts. The hard work ethic of Mexicans precedes them," she said. And Mexicans and other Hispanics are drawn to the state by family members who have located here.

"There's an established network of friends and relatives who facilitate the migration here," Velez said.

Hispanics in Wisconsin by 2002

- Total US = 288.4 mil, up 6.9 [2.5%] from '00
- Total Hispanic = 38.8, up 3.5 [9.0%] from '00
- Hispanics as % total US growth = 50.7%
- Percent of total Hispanic growth that are immigrants = 1,855,000, or 53%
- WI total = 5.286 mil, down 0.78 [1.5%] from '00
- WI Hispanic = 209,074, up 15,323 [7.9%] from '00
- WI Hispanics = 0.5% of total US Hispanics and 0.5% of Hispanic growth between '00 and '02

Source: US Census

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/RHC/Postings/director_presentations/FedRes.ppt



What challenges does your population group currently face related to transportation?

Background

Many Hispanics arrive by car, truck or bus for the most part. Often several individuals or families use one or two vehicles to get their families to their destination. Upon arriving, those who got a ride from a family member or friend would go out and buy an inexpensive car to use while here. If the family leaves to go to another destination, they are most probably going to sell their car, join their group and repeat the process as often as they move. If they settle out, which is becoming a more common occurrence, they would more than likely retain their car.

Problems

1. Small, rural areas have little to no public transportation.
2. Small, rural areas cover a wide geographical area, making walking at the least inconvenient and at the most, not an option.
3. Lack of transportation and fear keep these little communities within communities from mingling with the larger community.
4. Inadequate transportation makes issues such as health care even harder.



Future Trends/Needs/Perceptions


- The Hispanic Community is going to continue to grow.
- Change needs to be systemic.
- Change needs to be a global, multi-pronged approach.
- Change needs to include Educational Institutions:
 - Higher Education Resources
 - K-12, Head Start, Migrant Head Start, Charter Schools, Alternative Schools, etc.
 - Health Agencies



Global Considerations that Apply to all Areas: Language

- Language Learning Opportunities: Grants for new approaches to Language Acquisition.
 - * Take the program to the learners, either individually or to groups geographically close.
 - * Classes should be shorter than traditional ones and more frequent .
 - *Cost will need to be addressed so that opportunities are not out of reach.
- Educational Opportunities: HEP, GED
 - *Should be offered in Spanish as well as English.
 - *New material is most quickly Learned in L1.
- College Courses should be offered in Spanish
- Translation/Interpretation Services:
 - *Becoming proficient in languages other than English should be encouraged from the earliest of days in our Educational Institutions through Post High School Institutions.
 - *Pamphlets, materials, forms etc. need to translated and available.

Global Considerations that Apply to all Areas: Intolerance/ Prejudice

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- Cultural Presentations: Dance, Music, Theatre
 - Monitoring of County Services
 - Town Meetings
 - Bill Boards highlighting positive cultural characteristics, contributions, commonalities
 - Radio and Television Clips
 - Television Job Boards and Community Announce Boards might be bilingual or in the major languages in the area.
 - Sensitivity training in local governmental organizations, as well as other public arenas.
 - Tax incentives to organizations who make inroads into bringing all community stakeholders together in constructive beneficial manners.
 - Community Awards for building Community Unity by Bringing Cultures Closer Together
 - Have a “Culture Beat” in Local Community Newspapers.

What challenges does your population group currently face related to health care?

Problems

1. Language Barriers: Few health care facilities have sufficient bilingual staff.
2. Dental Health is one of the most significant issues in health care:
*Most dentists do not accept Medicaid, or other low-income insurance.
3. Diabetes and High Blood Pressure are very common health concerns in the Hispanic Community.
4. There are issues of lack of health education, lack of Spanish publications available to the communities where they tend to settle.
5. A lack of money often urges them to make choices to defer health care issues so that they can work and provide money necessary for food and rent and other bills.
6. When ill enough to seek medical assistance, the Emergency Room becomes the family Doctor, if they can get there.

Global Considerations that Apply to all Areas: Health

Mobile Health Units:

- Health Care Staff should be bilingual ideally. Till this can be brought about, translators and interpreters should be scouted and encouraged to relocate, if necessary.
- Available at hours patients can access them.
- Announcements and schedules should be in Spanish and distributed through a variety of resources (i.e. grocery stores, gas stations, camps, schools etc.)
- Have a wide array of services such as injections, simple tests like glucose tests, high blood pressure tests etc.
- Consider Dental Mobile Units

Transportation to Wider Health Services (Similar to the Elderly/ Disabled Vans)

Clinics

- La Clinica is a wonderful resource to Hispanics in the area. More areas need to investigate this model and add it to other community resources.

What challenges does your population group currently face related to housing?

Problems

1. There is limited availability of low-cost, adequate housing.
2. There are issues of prejudice: Hispanics are often not seen as desirable renters. When a Hispanic calls ads in the paper, they are often told that the unit has been rented. I did not believe that this sort of opposition still existed. After a friend got frustrated calling. I called back several of the ads she had called. I set up appointments to go see over half of those I called.
3. Length of contracts are often inconvenient or impossible to meet.
4. Meeting first and last month, security deposits, deposits for utilities and telephone services make most housing well outside of reach.



Global Considerations that Apply to all Areas: Housing

1. Monitor housing standards that already exist.
2. Consider grants and other financial incentives to build low-cost housing.
3. Bring community stakeholders together to identify areas where non-profit agencies can assist in developing low-cost adequate housing.
4. Evaluate other communities and states that have answered some of these housing issues.

Hispanics sink roots deep into Racine

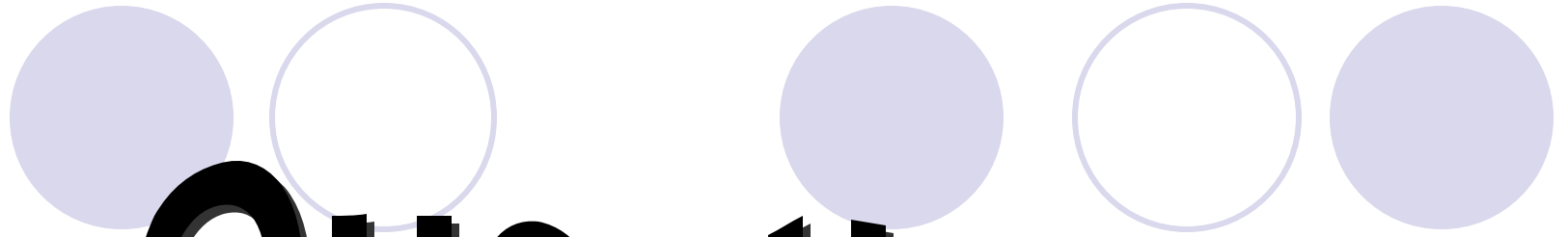
By SHEILA B. LALWANI

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Posted: Dec. 25, 2004

- When the Munoz family arrived in Racine in the 1950s as farm laborers, Lionel Munoz wasn't yet born. His father, whose family was originally from Mexico, moved from the fields to the factory at the now-defunct Case Corp. plant. Bit by bit, dollar by dollar, he etched out a life for his family and in 1974, for \$25,000, bought a two-story house with a bath and a half, four bedrooms and a small kitchen. The family of 10 was just seconds away from Lake Michigan.
- Munoz, the youngest of eight children, was 13 when the family left its rented house and got its first taste of the American dream. Now 43, he lives in the house that was such a landmark for his family. In 1990, he bought the house from his father by taking over the remainder of the mortgage. He has spent \$2,000 to tear out the floors and redo the bathrooms and an additional \$1,000 and counting to put a recreation room in the basement.
- His neighborhood, on the south side of Racine from **16th St. to 21st St. between Grand Ave. and Racine St., is one of the most densely populated Latino communities in the city. Roughly half of the areas 2,200 residents claim some Hispanic heritage. With nearly 15,000 Latinos, Racine County is home to the second largest Latino population in the state**; Milwaukee is the largest. Like Munoz, many children of the first wave of Hispanics are reinvesting in the neighborhoods where they grew up. A 10-minute drive south of downtown, this pre-World War II neighborhood offers a buffet of authentic Mexican restaurants and grocery stores mixed with plastic-covered windows and uneven sidewalks.
- Affordable housing helps its popularity. The most recent figures from the city's Department of Development show that one- and two-story houses sell for \$50,000 to \$70,000. Often, children inherit the property from their parents or buy it for pennies on the dollar, sidestepping the mainstream real estate selling process.
- Its pretty cool now. People are coming back, said Mark Schultz, program director for Neighborhood Housing Services. You see a lot of promise in the neighborhood. **Neighborhood Housing Services is a non-profit group that buys abandoned houses, rehabilitates them and sells them to low- or moderate-income households. The organization recently paid \$55,000 for a house and is just beginning to gut it and give it a second life. The group has rehabbed 15 homes and has five more in the works.**

- Over the past three years, Schultz, who has lived on the south side his entire life, has received neighborhood improvement grants and funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as private and corporate donations. As a mortgage banker with Johnson Bank, he helped Latinos buy homes but eventually left that job to work on neighborhood development full time. Third- and fourth-generation Latinos make up the majority of his clients. He has assembled a board of directors that includes residents and hired someone with Spanish skills to work with residents. The area was headed in a downward spiral, he said. It needed the help. This was an opportunity with NHS to come in and make a difference. Through code enforcements and low-interest loans, the city has made efforts to improve and maintain the quality of life in the neighborhood.
- Schultz found that it has been easy to market the neighborhood to those who already know it. He remembers one woman who enrolled in his home-buyer training program and was interested in a house on Howe St. Her grandmother had operated the building as a grocery store. Its almost like a family, resident Ruben Padilla, 32, said of the neighborhood camaraderie. We like to get together for cookouts. The Padilla household on Racine St. is deep into its second generation. Ruben lives with his mother in the two-story tan shingled home with the Mexican flag flying atop. This location is great, said Lauro Davalos, who with his wife, Hermelinda, owns La Tapatia grocery story-restaurant on Mead St. All the houses here are Mexican. The Munoz's are regulars at La Tapatia, a short walk from their house. Munoz shares his family home with his wife, Yolanda, and two sons, Samuel, 19, and Emmanuel, 12. A technician at Great Northern Corp. in Racine, he says this neighborhood is home to him. His mortgage has been paid off for three years, siblings are within blocks and after his mother died, he couldn't bring himself to sell the house anyway.
- For information on Neighborhood Housing Services of Southeastern Wisconsin, call (262) 633-3330. <http://www.nw.org/network/pubs/alert/january2005Alert.htm>



Questions

