



# THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

## In this issue >>>

- Thinking About Giving Yoga A Try?
- Public Hearings Scheduled
- Are You Advocate Material?
- Make Sure Your Vote Counts
- SAVE THE DATE - Older American's Month Celebration
- Senior Transportation Changes/Fees
- Tax Deadlines - Assistance
- Elder Crisis Response Consortium formed

## DON'T FORGET

Schedule your appointment for the Senior Citizens Utility Tax Rebate today!

913-573-8531

Rebates end March 31, 2016

## 8 SPRING CLEANING TIPS FOR KEEPING SENIORS SAFE

Spring cleaning is often a not so welcomed tradition for many. However, after a long winter, it can feel good to de-clutter and refresh your home. For seniors, spring cleaning is also a great time to re-organize everyday items so they are easier to find and ensure your home is set-up in a way that promotes safety and the prevention of falls.

Here are 8 spring cleaning tips for helping to keep seniors safe:

- 1) **De-clutter.** Make sure you have a clear walking path throughout your home and ask for help moving pieces of furniture that could pose a tripping hazard or be easily bumped into.
- 2) **Clean out your medicine cabinet.** Take inventory of your current medications and make sure that expired medicines, both over and under-the-counter are thrown away.
- 3) **Clean out your pantry and refrigerator.** Be sure to check the expiration dates on cans and jars. Clear the freezer of anything that is either too old to eat or freezer burned.
- 4) **Recycle old newspapers and magazines.** Old piles of newspapers, magazines and junk mail can easily clutter up a house. Gather these up and take them to your local recycling facility.
- 5) **Donate used items.** Make it easier to get to the things you use every day by clearing out the things you no longer need. Donate any gently used items to a local charity or church.
- 6) **Check rugs, mats and hand rails.** Another way to prevent falls is to ensure all rugs and mats are secured to the floor with a non-slip backing. Also, be sure to check that any hand rails are tight to the wall.
- 7) **Check smoke alarms and fire extinguishers.** Replace all the batteries in your smoke detectors and make sure they are working accordingly. You should also check the date on your fire extinguishers and replace them if they are more than 12 years old.
- 8) **Create a contact list.** Make a contact list of family, friends and other important numbers and keep it by the phone. You should also include emergency numbers such as the local police, fire department and doctors.



Sometimes even with regular cleaning and safety checks, it still might not be safe to live at home. If you or your loved one finds they struggle with everyday tasks and are looking for a low maintenance lifestyle, it might be time to have the conversation about senior living.

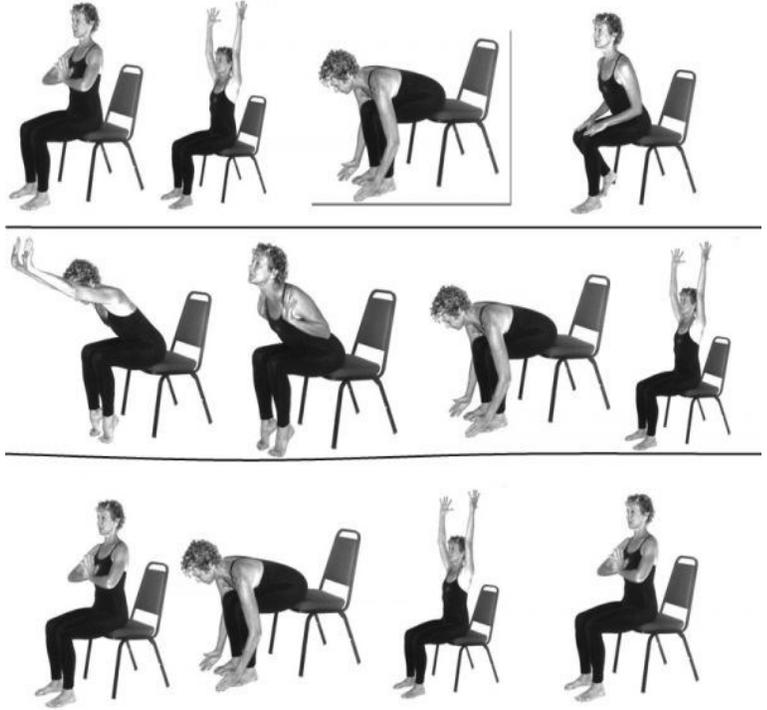
## THINKING ABOUT GIVING YOGA A TRY?

While it is true people experienced in yoga can do some pretty amazing things with their bodies, looking like a pretzel is not the goal. For most of us, yoga provides a great opportunity to move our bodies in a physical yet gentle way that has many positive effects on our body, mind and spirit.

Simply put, yoga is about stretching, posing and breathing. The benefits are numerous, and many have been scientifically proven. Yoga helps increase muscle tone, flexibility, balance, strength and concentration. Yoga also helps improve posture by strengthening and loosening tight areas in the body, like our shoulders and muscles in the upper back. It can help with sleep, issues, chronic pain, migraines, stress and depression. Its even helpful for people with certain health conditions, including arthritis, osteoporosis and high blood pressure.

One of the best things about yoga is that almost anyone can do it regardless of age or physical fitness. Yoga poses are very adaptable. There also are many levels and styles of yoga, including chair yoga and water yoga. The type of yoga that's best for each person usually depends on age, physical ability, activity level and other things specific to the individual.

As with any new exercise regimen, it is important to speak with your doctor before trying yoga. At the right, you will find some simple yoga poses to get your started.



In addition to Easter's religious significance, it also has a commercial side, as evidenced by the mounds of jelly beans and marshmallow chicks that appear in stores each spring. As with Christmas over the centuries various folk customs and pagan traditions, including Easter eggs, bunnies, baskets and candy, have become a standard part of this holy holiday. Many children look forward to hunting for colored eggs filled with an array of items, from coins to candy.

People all over the world celebrate St. Patrick's Day, especially places with large Irish-American communities. Feasting on the day features traditional Irish food, including corned beef, corned cabbage, coffee, soda bread, potatoes and shepherd's pie. Many celebrations also hold an Irish breakfast of sausage, black and white pudding, fried eggs and fried tomatoes. A common tradition is the St. Patrick's Day parade.



### Dear Newsletter Recipient:

For years "The Communicator" has served as a vital means for providing seniors in Wyandotte County important information regarding aging news, events, programs, services and much more! The newsletter's continuity depends on your donations for its existence. Please help us to continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor!

- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$100**      **Advocate**  
*defensor*
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$50**        **Benefactor**  
*benefactor*
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$25**         **Patron**  
*patrón*
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$10**         **Contributor**  
*contribuidor*
- \_\_\_\_\_            **Other**  
*otro*

¡Necesitamos su ayuda como patrocinador para continuar con esta publicación importante! ¡Gracias!

## *Thank You!*

Appreciation is extended to the following who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.

*Names are listed in alphabetical order.*

- Patricia Berry (Contributor)
- Dixie Kaster
- Wanda Duncan
- Juanita Ellis (Contributor)
- Jean Eklund (Patron)
- Pauline Estell (Patron)
- Linda Hernandez (Benefactor)
- Milton Huston (Contributor)
- Patience O'Hara (Patron)
- Louis Pollard (Contributor)
- Jerry Smeby (Contributor)
- Edna Thomas (Contributor)

If you would like to contribute to the cost of the newsletter, please make checks payable to:

[Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA](#)  
Attn: The Communicator  
849 North 47th, Suite C  
Kansas City, Kansas 66102

## BLOOD PRESSURE MATTERS

About 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. has high blood pressure, but many don't realize it. High blood pressure is sometimes called a "silent killer," because it usually has no warning signs, yet it can lead to life-threatening conditions like heart attack or stroke.

Normal blood flow delivers nutrients and oxygen to all parts of your body, including important organs like your heart, brain and kidneys. Your beating heart helps to push blood through your vast network of blood vessels, both large and small. Your blood vessels, in turn, constantly adjust. They become narrower or wider to maintain your blood pressure and keep blood flowing at a healthy rate.

High blood pressure can make your heart work too hard and lose strength. The high force of blood flow can damage your blood vessels, making them weak, stiff or narrower. Over time, hypertension can harm several important organs, including your heart, kidneys, brain and eyes.

Anyone, even children, can develop high blood pressure. But the risk for hypertension rises with age. Once people are in their 60s, about two-thirds of the population is affected by hypertension.

Because it usually has no symptoms, the only way to know for sure that you have hypertension is have a blood pressure test. Blood pressure is given as two numbers. The first number represents the pressure in your blood vessels as the heart beats (called systolic pressure). The second is the pressure as your heart relaxes and fills with blood (diastolic pressure). Experts generally agree that the safest blood pressure - or "normal blood pressure" is 120/80 or lower, meaning systolic blood pressure is 120 or less and diastolic pressure is 80 or less.

If your blood pressure falls between "normal" and "hypertension" it's sometimes called prehypertension. People with prehypertension are more likely to end up with high blood pressure if they don't take steps to prevent.

Diet, weight loss and physical activity are key to staying healthy.

*Resource: NIH News In Health*



## SPRING FORWARD

Daylight Savings will be Sunday, March 13, 2016.

Daylight Savings in the US starts on the second Sunday in March of each year and ends the first Sunday in November.

It goes into effect each spring when clocks are moved forward by one hour at 2am standard time and the time becomes 2am daylight savings time (DST). When DST ends in the fall, the clock is moved back at 2am and the time becomes 1am standard time.



Time to  
Spring Ahead

JOIN US AT ONE OF THE SCHEDULED

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Public Hearings are a great opportunity for the public to learn about programs and/or give feedback regarding senior services in Wyandotte and Leavenworth Counties.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Public Hearing, please feel free to contact the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

March 22, 2016  
10am

Bonner Springs Senior Center  
200 East 3rd Street  
Bonner Springs, Kansas 66012

April 19, 2016  
10am

Plaza Towers  
1200 North 75th Place  
Kansas City, Kansas 66112

## ARE YOU AN ADVOCATE MATERIAL?

Advocates for the elderly examine issues that pose challenges for older adults and strive to improve conditions by appealing to legislative officials. Nursing home elder abuse, lack of access to medication, healthcare,

and transportation challenges are a few examples of difficulties that some older adults face. Advocates help the elderly by focusing on pressing issues and creating greater public awareness.

Opportunities to become an advocate for the seniors of Wyandotte and Leavenworth Counties are available. Advocacy involves contacting and building relationships with local commissioners and legislative delegates. These tasks are performed on a volunteer basis and are not paid positions. Some groups require that you be 60 years of age, while others do not.

Should you be interested in becoming an advocate for senior services, please feel free to contact the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Resource Center office at 913-573-8531.

**ad·vo·cate**

*noun*  
plural noun: **advocates**  
*advəkət/*

a person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy. "He was an untiring **advocate** of economic reform"

**synonyms**

champion, upholder, supporter, backer, promoter, proponent, exponent, spokesman, spokeswoman, spokesperson, campaigner, fighter, crusader;

## MARCH FOR MEALS CAMPAIGN

In March, hundreds of local *Meals on Wheels* programs across the country will reach out to their communities to build the support to enable them to deliver nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks to America's seniors all year long. By volunteering, donating or speaking out, you can ensure the seniors in your neighborhood can live more healthy, happy and independent lives at home where they want to be.



The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging & Disability Resource Center will too participate in the 2016 March for Meals Campaign. Look toward the May/June edition of *The Communicator* for events that took place in our area.

If you are homebound and need a nutritious meal delivered to your home, please contact the Meals on Wheels office at 913-573-8546.

## MAKE SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS

You may register (or re-register) anytime until 21 days prior to each election. Voter registration is closed during the 21 day period before each election. Voter Registration Applications must be postmarked no later than the 21st day prior to any election and received in the Election Office by the 9th day before the election to be valid. Voter Registration Application postmarked or received after the deadline are not entered until after the election.



### Who can register to vote?

- √ Any United States Citizen
- √ Those persons 18 years of age or older or will be 18 before the next election
- √ Wyandotte County residents

### Where Can I Register to Vote?

- Online, if you have a current Kansas Driver's License or
- Non-Driver Identification Card
- By Mail
- In person at the Election Office, 850 State Avenue
- Office of the City Clerk in:
  - ◊ Kansas City, KS, 701 N 7th Street
  - ◊ Bonner Springs, KS, 205 E. 2nd Street
  - ◊ Edwardsville, KS, 690 South 4th Street
- Kansas Driver's License Office
- Public Assistance Office
- Public Libraries

Keep in mind that the Primary and General Presidential Elections are coming soon. **MAKE SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS** by making sure you are able to vote in the Primary Election on August 2, 2016 and most importantly, in the General Election on November 8, 2016.

Should you have any questions regarding voting registration or upcoming elections, please contact the Wyandotte County Election Office at 913-573-8500.

# SAVE THE DATE!

**Older Americans' Month Celebration**

**Thursday, May 26, 2016**



**12p to 3pm**

**Park and Ride transportation will be available**



**Concessions**

**Drawings**

**Informational Booths**

**Health Screenings**

**Entertainment**

**Giveaways**

**Look for more information in the May/June edition of *The Communicator***

## MEALS ON WHEELS CHECK-OFF

Kansas taxpayers have the option again this year of donating part or all of their 2015 income tax refund to the State's *Meals on Wheels* programs.



Individuals who owe taxes may contribute by checking the amount they want to donate and writing a check for the full amount.

Check off funds are distributed to meal programs according to a formula based on the number of meals served.

## AMERICAN STROKE FOUNDATION DONATION TO MEALS ON WHEELS PARTICIPANTS

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging would like to send a special "thank you" to the American Stroke Foundation who graciously donated Valentine cards to all Meals on Wheels participants in Wyandotte County.

It's mission is to let homebound and homeless seniors know that someone is thinking about them on Valentines Day. Thank you again for caring about the seniors in our area!



# SENIOR TRANSPORTATION

## Policy and Fare Changes

A regional effort is underway in the Kansas City area to coordinate transit and make the regional transit system more user friendly. The effort, known as RideKC, has already resulted in a regional brand, regional website and several regional bus passes.

While the general level of prices for goods and services, including transportation increases annually for all, the Unified Government has been able to cover increases in transit cost from reserves and direct assistance from the Federal Government. However, for the last several years, the Unified Government has also had significant decline in direct financial assistance from the Federal Government to support transit. Changes in policy and fares are generally described as follows:

- ◇ The eligible age for senior citizens to qualify for senior transportation has increased to 65 years of age. The change affects both Non-ADA Senior Transit and Senior Group Trip riders. Existing clients who do not meet the new eligible age were grandfathered and will remain eligible for services.
- ◇ Fares for Non-ADA Senior Transit service, commonly referred to as **Demand Response** now costs \$2 each one-way trip (\$4 roundtrip). Non-ADA Senior Transit Service is described as origin to destination services, primarily designed for medical, nutrition and work trips to locations within Wyandotte County. Non-ADA Senior Transit service is available Monday - Friday, 7am to 7pm. Registration and prior reservations are required for all Non-ADA Senior Transit riders.
- ◇ The fare for Senior Group Trips have increased to \$5 per each round trip. This service provides transportation for groups of 10 or more senior citizens to destinations in Kansas within a 50 mile radius of Kansas City, Kansas. Senior Group Trips require prior reservations and are available Monday - Friday.



Should you have further questions regarding Senior Transit Services or would like to schedule a ride, you may contact the Unified Government Transit Center at 913-573-8308.

## TAX DEADLINES

The deadline to file for your **Senior Citizen Utility Tax Rebate** will end **March 31, 2016**. You may apply at the Clerks Office located on the 3rd floor inside City Hall located at 701 North 7th Street, KCK 66101. The Aging & Disability Resource Center located at 849 North 47th Street, Suite C, Kansas City, Kansas will also be assisting by appointment only. You must have been 65 years of age the entire year of 2015 (born before January 1, 2016), be a resident of Kansas City Kansas (Bonner Springs and Edwardsville residents are not eligible) and have a total household income of less than \$25,000.

If you would like to schedule an appointment with the Aging & Disability Resource Center location, you may dial 913-573-8531. All questions should be directed to the Unified Government's Clerks office at 913-573-5260.

**April 18, 2016** is the tax deadline for filing **HOMESTEAD**. The Aging & Disability Resource Center does not have staff to assist you with filing these forms, but you may find assistance at the following locations:

Questions regarding assistance filing your Homestead should be directed to the AARP Hotline at 1-888-227-7669 or visit their website at: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).



### Kansas City Kansas Community College

7250 State Avenue  
Kansas City, Kansas 66112  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10am - 2pm**

### Providence-Ball YMCA

8601 Parallel  
Kansas City, Kansas 66112  
**Wednesdays & Fridays, 12 - 4pm**  
Must pre-register at: [www.kstaxaide.com](http://www.kstaxaide.com)

### Kansas City, Kansas City Hall

701 North 7th Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
**Mondays, 9am - 2:30pm**

### Turner Recreational Center

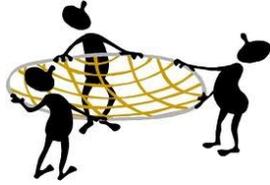
831 North 55th Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66106  
**Thursdays, 10am - 2pm**

**NEW!**

## Elder Crisis Response Consortium Formed

*Serving the Citizens of Wyandotte County*

**MISSION:** To ensure older adults experiencing acute crisis are provided appropriate and expedient response from our community responders to address the acute crisis and secure the safety and well-being of the older adult.



### VALUES:

No older adult who may lack capacity to make informed decisions should remain in an unsafe situation that places them at risk for abuse, neglect, exploitation.

Older adults deserve the same protection currently written in statutes that protect other vulnerable groups like persons with mental illness and children.

Wyandotte county and the leaders of this community agree to work together to resolve any barriers and offer solutions facing older adults needing critical services during times of acute crisis.

### GOALS:

1. To review current legislation on current laws regarding elder protection and statute.
2. To develop new legislation to address any gaps in elder protection rights.
3. To explore options for enhanced guardianship/conservatorship choices in Kansas.
4. To engage with key community leaders, including but not limited to, Adult Protective Services, Wyandotte County Probate Court, Wyandotte Mental Health Services, Police Department, Aging & Disability Resource Center, Crisis Intervention Team and the Kansas Guardianship Program.

The new group will meet on a quarterly basis as part of the Elder Crisis Response Consortium.

### DOES EMAIL WORK FOR YOU?

By joining our email club, you'll get information before everyone else!

Send an email to:  
[60Plus@wycokck.org](mailto:60Plus@wycokck.org)  
with your request.



## DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF) WILL NO LONGER PROCESS MEDICAID APPLICATIONS FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED

Effective January 1, 2016, the Department for Children and Families (DCF) will no longer process Medicaid (Kancare) for the Elderly and Disabled after 40 years of providing this service.

### THE KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT (KDHE) WILL TAKE OVER THIS RESPONSIBILITY.

Everyone will still be able to fill out an application for KanCare online at [ApplyForKancare.ks.gov](http://ApplyForKancare.ks.gov). For assistance or paper applications, people with disabilities and the elderly can call 1-800-792-4884. Kansas Department for Health and Environment (KDHE) is deploying an additional 18 out-stationed workers in several cities throughout Kansas, including Kansas City. These out-stationed workers will be available, by appointment only, whenever a face to face visit is required. People with disabilities or the elderly who need to fax in applications or any supporting documentation will now need to use the fax number 1-844-264-6285.

Families and children applying for KanCare can fill out an application online at [ApplyForKancare.ks.gov](http://ApplyForKancare.ks.gov), they can call 1-800-792-4884 and fax applications to 1-800-498-1255.

## LA DIVISION DE NINOS Y FAMILIAS (DCF) DEJARA DE PROCESAR LAS SOLICITUDES DE MEDICAID PARA ANCIANOS Y PERSONAS INCAPACITADAS

Efectivo el 1 de enero de 2016, el Departamento de Niños y Familias (DCF) dejará de procesar Medicaid (Kancare) para los ancianos y los incapacitados, después de 40 años proveyendo este servicio.

### EL DEPARTAMENTO DE SALUD Y AMBIENTE DE KANSAS (KDHE) ASUMIRÁ ESTA RESPONSABILIDAD

Todo el mundo seguirá siendo capaz de llenar una solicitud en línea para KanCare en [ApplyForKancare.ks.gov](http://ApplyForKancare.ks.gov). Para obtener asistencia o solicitudes en papel, las personas incapacitadas y los ancianos pueden llamar al 1-800-792-4884. El Departamento de Salud y Ambiente de Kansas (KDHE) está desplegando una red adicional de 18 trabajadores en varias ciudades a través de Kansas, incluyendo Kansas City. Estos trabajadores estarán disponibles, solo por cita, a menos que una visita cara a cara es necesaria. Las personas incapacitadas o los ancianos que necesitan mandar sus solicitudes o cualquier documentación justificativa por facsímil usan el número de fax 1-844-264-6285.

Las familias y los niños que solicitan KanCare pueden llenar una solicitud en línea en [ApplyForKancare.ks.gov](http://ApplyForKancare.ks.gov), o pueden llamar al 1-800-792-4884 y mandar solicitudes por fax al 1-800-498-1255.

## Avocado-Bean Wrap

### Ingredients:

- 2 ripe avocados
- 1 cup fresh or jarred salsa
- 2 tsp oil
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 can (15oz) low-sodium black beans
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro
- 4 whole wheat wraps
- 4 cups coarsely chopped or shredded romaine lettuce

### Preparation:

1) Remove pit and peel from avocados. Coarsely chop 1 avocado; mash the other avocado in a small bowl and stir in 1/4 cup salsa until blended. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside.

2) Heat oil in medium skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté pepper and carrots 3 minutes. Add cumin and cook 30 seconds more or until fragrant. Add beans and remaining 3/4 cup salsa; heat through. Stir in the chopped avocado and cilantro; mix well.

3) Spread about 3 Tbsp of the mashed avocado-salsa mixture on each wrap and top each with 1 cup of shredded lettuce. Spoon 1 cup of the bean mixture over bottom third of wrap. Starting at bottom, roll up tightly. Place seam side down on serving platter. Serve with lime wedges.



## SPRING TIME IS AROUND THE CORNER!

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- APRIL FOOLS' DAY
- BASKET
- BEER
- BUNNY
- CABBAGE
- CHOCOLATE
- CORNED BEEF
- DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
- EASTER
- EGG HUNT
- EGGS
- FLOWERS
- FOUR LEAF CLOVER
- GARDENING
- GRASS
- GRASSHOPPER
- GREEN
- HAM
- HOMESTEAD
- INCOME TAX
- IRISH
- JELLY BEAN
- LEPRECHAUN
- MARSHMALLOW
- PARADE
- POT OF GOLD
- PRANKS
- RAIN
- RAINBOW
- ROBIN
- SHAMROCK
- SPRING
- SPRING HOLIDAY
- ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- TULIPS
- UMBRELLA

W	W	W	D	Y	P	F	Q	Z	D	R	H	F	D	C	S	J	S	R	R	X	N	Z	H	W
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## Wyandotte/Leavenworth

### Area Agency on Aging

849 North 47th Street - Suite C

Kansas City, Kansas 66102

Phone: 913-573-8531

Fax: 913-573-8577

Email: [60Plus@wycokck.org](mailto:60Plus@wycokck.org)

**DisABLED or 60PLUS?...Call on Us!**

**PRESORTED STANDARD**

**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**

**KANSAS CITY, MO**

**PERMIT NO. 6412**

### calendar >>>

#### DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS

*Sunday, March 13, 2016*

#### ST. PATRICK'S DAY

*Thursday, March 17, 2016*

#### SPRING HOLIDAY

*Friday, March 25, 2016*

*Unified Government Office Closed*

#### EASTER

*Sunday, March 27, 2016*



The Communicator is published bi-monthly by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services through the Older Americans' Act. We assume no responsibility for the care and return of unsolicited material. Donations are suggested.

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age national origin, sex, or handicap.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services at 1-800-432-3535.

Linda Ramirez, Editor

Emma Fonseca, Contributing Editor

### coming soon >>>

#### APRIL FOOLS' DAY

*Friday, April 1, 2016*

#### EARTH DAY

*Friday, April 22, 2016*

#### ARBOR DAY

*Friday, April 29, 2016*