



Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

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MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Medicare Open Enrollment is HERE! Every year between October 15 and December 7, Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to review and/or make changes to their existing Medicare Health Plan.

During Open Enrollment you can:

- Add, drop or change your prescription drug coverage.
- Change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Change from a Medicare Advantage plan to Original Medicare.
- Switch from a Medicare Advantage plan that offers drug coverage to a plan that doesn't offer drug coverage.
- Join a Medicare prescription drug plan.
- Switch from one Medicare drug plan to another Medicare drug plan.
- Drop your Medicare prescription drug coverage completely.



Review your plan each year to make sure it will meet your needs for the following year. If you're satisfied that your current plan will meet your needs for new year, you don't need to do anything.

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) provides SHICK counseling by appointment only. Appointments will be scheduled daily, Monday - Thursday by contacting the ADRC for an appointment at 913-573-8531.

WEIGHT LOSS HELPS KNEE ARTHRITIS

Recent research shows that people who are overweight can reduce their symptoms of knee arthritis by losing at least 20% of their weight.

Millions of older adults have stiff, painful knees caused by arthritis. Arthritis causes a breakdown of the cushion of tissue inside the knee joint. Without this cushion, bone can rub against bone. That may cause pain and swelling. Being overweight could make the symptoms worse.

Experts generally advise adults who are overweight or obese to lose at least 10% of their weight to reduce symptoms of knee arthritis. Recently, a research team wondered whether 20% weight loss would help reduce symptoms even more.

The study included 240 overweight and obese adults over 55 with painful knee arthritis. Researchers compared the people who lost 20% or more body weight with those who lost 5%. The people who lost 20% or more reported less pain. They could walk farther in a 6-minute test. In addition, blood tests revealed a much lower level of a substance related to pain and swelling.

The importance of the study is that a weight loss of 20% or greater results in better clinical outcomes and is achievable without surgical or pharmacologic intervention.



LEGAL SERVICES

Kansas Legal Services is once again taking appointments for legal services. Interested seniors who are over the age of 60 and live in Wyandotte County are eligible as funding allows. Services provided by Kansas Legal Services include:

Guardian/Conservators
Adult Abuse/Exploitation
Simple Wills
Social Security/SSI
Medicare/Medicaid
Power of Attorney
Living Wills



Appointments are scheduled monthly for the 2nd Tuesday by calling the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

DOES EMAIL WORK FOR YOU?

By joining our email club, you'll get information before everyone else! Send an email to: 60Plus@wycokck.org with your request.



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 continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor!

Respectfully, *The Newsletter Committee*

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.

_____ \$100	Advocate <i>defensor</i>
_____ \$50	Benefactor <i>benefactor</i>
_____ \$25	Patron <i>patrón</i>
_____ \$10	Contributor <i>contribuidor</i>
_____	Other <i>otro</i>

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

Names are listed in alphabetical order.

Jim Needham

AREA AGENCY ON AGING RECOGNIZES VOLUNTEERS

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging recognized volunteers at the Annual Volunteer Recognition.



Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director of the Area Agency on Aging presented Mrs. Modestine Bell with a "Volunteer Service Award" for 14 years of dedicated service. Mrs. Bell continues to provide In-House (office) support weekly.

Meal Site Volunteers: Meal site volunteers work Monday through Friday at their corresponding meal site location. The meal site volunteers reconcile the meal count and complete necessary paper work, reserve and serve meals, collect and keep track of the donations, clean up after the meals have served and insure the smooth operation of the meal sites.

Silver Haired Legislators: The Silver Haired Legislature is composed of 125 members statewide, all are over the age of 60 and are elected from their county residence. The Silver Haired Legislators develop bills and resolutions which are presented to the Kansas Legislature and the Governor as recommendations for state policy.

Areawide Advisory Council Members: The advisory council serves in an advisory capacity and represents the interest of individuals 60+ and their caregivers. The group meets on a monthly basis in both Wyandotte and Leavenworth counties. Some of the groups priorities include identifying and addressing concerns and needs of older persons , reviewing federal, state and local policies and programs which impact older persons, and serving as local advocates to older persons. Through ongoing communications, the Advisory Council is kept abreast, informed and knowledgeable of all current incentives and projects under the aging umbrella. Council members are appointed by the Commissioners of both Wyandotte and Leavenworth Counties

In-House Volunteers: An In-House volunteer provides clerical assistance such as filing, data entry duties, answering telephones, making follow up calls and assists where needed.

A special thank you to the following merchants who sponsored the Volunteer Recognition Event!



Fritz Hamburger Restaurant
Happy Foods, North
Italian Delight
Liberty Fruit Co.
Mad Jacks Fish & More

Support the above named establishments as they selflessly support our community!



2018 VOLUNTEERS

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Adams, Beverly | Emerson, Tanya | Little, Myrtha |
| Allen, Valarie | Filbert, Jessie | Mabion, Richard |
| Anderson, Donna | Frances, Sharon | McKnight, Pamela |
| Angello, Mary | Friday, Curtis | McGinnis, Susan |
| Barnett, Ada | Fuentes, Juanita | Mitchell, Janet |
| Barber, Jacques | Gordon, Thomas | O'Neal, Carroll |
| Bell, Modestine | Greathouse, Betty | Pinkard, Deloris |
| Berry, Patricia | Guy, Cheryl | Pryor, Ida |
| Bersch, Linda | Hale Jr., Elton | Spencer, Bobby |
| Brunson, Alice | Henderson, Gladys | Spero, David |
| Carroll, Joy | Howe, Timothy | Spero, Joan |
| Chander, Stefica | Johnson, Linda | White, Joyce |
| Clark, Amber | Jones, Laleta | Williams, Charles |
| Davis, Jane | Jones, Lorene | Wortheam, Elvira |
| Elliott, Dolores | Keohane, Mike | |

CAREGIVER STRESS: Tips For Taking Care Of Yourself

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Caring for a loved one strains even the most resilient people. If you're a caregiver, take steps to preserve your own health and well-being.

As the population ages, more caregiving is being provided by people who aren't health care professionals. About 1 in 3 adults in the United States provides care to other adults as informal caregivers.

A caregiver is anyone who provides help to another person in need, such as an ill spouse or partner, a disabled child, or an aging relative. However, family members who are actively caring for an older adult often don't self-identify as a "caregiver." Recognizing this role can help caregivers receive the support they need.

As a caregiver, you may be so focused on your loved one that you don't realize that your own health and well-being are suffering. Watch for these signs of caregiver stress:

- ◆ Feeling overwhelmed or constantly worried.
- ◆ Feeling tired often.
- ◆ Getting too much sleep or not enough sleep.
- ◆ Gaining or losing weight.
- ◆ Becoming easily irritated or angry.
- ◆ Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy.
- ◆ Feeling sad.
- ◆ Having frequent headaches, bodily pain or other physical problems.
- ◆ Abusing alcohol or drugs, including prescription medications.

Too much stress, especially over a long time, can harm your health. As a caregiver, you're more likely to experience symptoms of depression or anxiety. In addition, you may not get enough sleep or physical activity, or eat a balanced diet — which increases your risk of medical problems, such as heart disease and diabetes.

The emotional and physical demands involved with caregiving can strain even the most resilient person. That's why it's so important to

take advantage of the many resources and tools available to help you provide care for your loved one.

Remember, if you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to care for anyone else.



If you are feeling the stress of your caregiving duties, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531 for assistance.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SENIOR FITNESS

Today's seniors are more vital than ever before. And good exercise is just as important for them as it is for people in any other age group. In fact, a study found that senior exercise programs help improve the overall quality of life for those who regularly participated in them. Exercise is actually found to be more important than a healthy diet. Specifically, the study found that seniors who exercise regularly are more likely to have:

- Improved physical and mental health
- Increased energy
- Improved social interactions
- Slowing or reversal of overall declining health
- Fewer limitations with daily activities
- Lower risk of depression
- Fewer falls and injuries
- Lower rates of hospitalization
- Lower rates of chronic disease (or more manageable symptoms for those who are already affected by it)

So, as you can see, there are many great benefits to beginning a regular workout routine.



The Area Agency on Aging provides free exercise classes (Enhanced Fitness Program) at two locations in Wyandotte County. If you would like more information regarding the Enhanced Fitness Program, feel free to contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

MEDICARE NEWS

Information provided by: *The My Medicare Matters Team webpage*

It's that time a year again! Medicare's Open Enrollment Period (OEP) began October 15th and ends December 7th. If you're already enrolled in a Medicare plan this is the time of year you can re-evaluate your coverage to make sure you are still enrolled in the best plan for your needs.

Over the next few weeks, leading up to and during the Medicare OEP you'll receive notices from your current Medicare plan, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and advertisements from other Medicare companies claiming to offer the best plans. All this information can be overwhelming and as tempting as it may toss it in with the junk mail and throw it away, that may not be the best idea. There are a lot of changes occurring with Medicare this year and to stay informed you need to review all the notices provided by your insurance company and CMS.

One of the most immediate changes impacts the Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D plan notification policies. Plans will no longer mail copies of the Evidence of Coverage to beneficiaries. Instead, the Evidence of Coverage will be available online and a hard copy must be requested. Here's a list of notifications and resources which you should review and/or request as you prepare for Medicare Open Enrollment:

- ✓ The Annual Notice of Change (ANOC), a 10+ page document sent out to people enrolled in a Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare Part D is sent by your Medicare plan and includes any changes to your current plans coverage, costs, or service area effective January 2019. Insurance companies can make changes every year that may increase your out-of-pocket cost or decrease your benefits, so it's important to review this document thoroughly. You should receive this notice by September 30, if not contact your plan directly.
- ✓ The Evidence of Coverage is 140+ page document that contains a detailed overview of what your current plan covers, cost, and more. Beginning in 2018, Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare Part D plans are no longer required to mail hard copies of the Evidence of Coverage to Medicare plan enrollees. Instead, Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D plans are required to publish the EOC on their website by October 15.
- ✓ Plans are required to mail a printed notice called the Notification of Electronic Materials to all enrollees explaining how to obtain hard copies of plan materials routinely available on the plan's website. The notice must list the plan's website, the date the documents will be available on the website and a phone number to request hard copies of the EOC, plan provider directories and/or plan formularies.
- ✓ The Medicare & You Handbook is sent by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in late September. This handbook contains lots of useful information about when Medicare covers certain services, including preventive care, medical equipment and supplies and much more. If you don't receive one by the second week in October, call **1-800-MEDICARE** to get another copy with your state's specific plan information, or go to the Medicare site to view the general information online at www.medicare.gov.

How Will Medicare Part C and Part D Change in 2019?

Did you know Medicare is making some changes for 2019? Goals of these Medicare changes include better servicing of beneficiaries and reducing the administrative burden on Medicare health and prescription drug plans. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates the Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C) and Medicare Prescription Drug coverage (Medicare Part D) changes will save Medicare around \$295 million every year. Most of the changes will be effective in 2019.



MEDICARE EVENTS

It's time to compare plans and make sure you have the right health and prescription drug coverage for 2019. You can stay with your current plan if you're certain it will meet your needs or look for a new one with better coverage, higher quality and lower costs.

Strangers Rest Baptist Church

Friday, November 2, 2018
11:30am - 12:30pm
2052 N 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

Washington Heights Apartments

Friday, November 30, 2018
3:30pm - 4:30pm
7701 Armstrong
Kansas City, KS 66112

Appointments are currently being made for one-on-one counseling sessions at the Area Agency on Aging & Disability Resource Center. You may make an appointment by dialing 913-573-8531.

Bring your Medicare card and a current list of medications along with the doses to your appointment.

SILVER HAIRD LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth County delegates made several recommendations to the Kansas Legislature during the SHL Annual session that was held October 2 - 4, 2018. While the recommendations are not law, it does allow the current Kansas Legislators to know what more than 400,000 senior citizens of Kansas need from their representatives, who seniors as well as other registered voters have selected by voting to send them to Topeka as their Senators and Representatives, be they Democratic or Republican. The following are supported by the Kansas Silver Haired Legislators:

- Support for Medicaid Expansion.
- Continued support for the KDOT Rural Public Transportation program .
- Support for the State of Kansas to fully fund KPERS as the law stipulates .
- Pass a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for KPERS beneficiaries.
- Protect Grandparents Rights in Child Custody and Visitation cases.
- Providing financial assistance in guardianship matters.

Four new bills and resolutions include:

- Continue full funding for the Senior Care Act Program, which allows Kansas Seniors to stay in their own homes with just an average of \$250 per month in financial assistance.
- Tax Issues - remove Sales Tax on Food and replace it with Sales Tax on Internet Purchases.
- Support the legalization of Sports betting in Kansas with a percentage of the funds being designated for Senior Programs in the State.
- Support legislation for non-THC medical cannabis.

Some of these recommendations are amendments to existing legislation and some are exclusions from current amendments; the final recommendations to be presented to the Kansas Legislators will be available soon.

Current Wyandotte/Leavenworth County delegates are: Thomas Gordon, Michael Keohane, Deloris Pinkard, Modestine Bell, Jacques Barber, Elton Hale, Pamela McKnight and Richard Mabion, (Alternate).

You may keep up with SHL issues or view contact information by visiting their website at: Kansas-shl.org

GENERAL ELECTION COMING

November 6, 2018

Polling places throughout the county are open 7am to 7pm.

Should you have questions regarding your polling place location, contact the Wyandotte County Election office at 913-573-8500 or visit them at 850 State Avenue, KCK.

Trained election workers are always available to guide you through the process.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

On November 4, 2018, daylight savings time ends. This is a perfect time to not only change your clocks back, but do a few other semi-annual tasks that will improve safety in your home.

- Change the batteries in your smoke detectors.
- Prepare a disaster kit for your house (water, food, flashlights, batteries and blankets).
- Check and discard expired medications. Those dates really do have meaning. Some very common over-the-counter medications can cause serious problems due to dates that have expired.



GET YOUR FLU SHOT

Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways. Although flu epidemics happen every year, the timing, severity and length of the season vary from year to year. Flu viruses are constantly changing so its not unusual for flu virus strains to appear each year.

Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctors offices, clinics, the health department or pharmacies.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) recommends that you get your flu shot by the end of October. So if you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, its time!



PEPPERMINT MERINGUES

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 egg whites
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 peppermint candy canes, crushed

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) In a bowl, beat egg whites until foamy. Sprinkle with salt and cream of tartar; beat until soft peaks form
- 2) Gradually add sugar, beating until stiff peaks form, about 7 minutes.
- 3) Drop teaspoonfuls onto ungreased foil or paper-lined baking sheets; sprinkle with crushed candy.
- 4) Bake at 225° for 1 1/2 hours. Turn off heat; leave cookies in the oven with the door ajar for at least 1 hour or until cool. Store in an airtight container.



- CANDY CANES
- CHIMNEY
- CHRISTMAS
- COAL
- CORNUCOPIA
- EGG NOG
- ELF
- FOOTBALL
- FRUITCAKE
- GARLAND
- GIVING
- HOLIDAY
- JOLLY
- MAYFLOWER
- MEDICARE
- MISTLETOE
- ORANGE
- ORNAMENTS
- PEPPERMINT
- PIGRIMS
- POINSETTIA
- PUMPKIN
- REINDEER
- RUDOLPH
- SANTA CLAUS
- SCROOGE
- SLEIGHBELLS
- SNOWFLAKE
- THANSIVING
- TINSEL
- TREE
- TURKEY
- VETERANS DAY
- WREATH
- YAMS
- YULETIDE

TIS THE SEASON

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.



Wyandotte/Leavenworth

Area Agency on Aging

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NOVEMBER >>>

VETERANS DAY

Sunday, November 11, 2018

THANKSGIVING DAY

Thursday, November 22, 2018
Unified Government Offices Closed

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Friday, November 23, 2018
Unified Government Offices Closed



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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

DECEMBER >>>

CHRISTMAS EVE

Monday, December 24, 2018

CHRISTMAS DAY

Tuesday, December 25, 2018
Unified Government Offices Closed

NEW YEARS EVE

Monday, December 31, 2018