

THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

2022 - September/October

Volume 30, Issue 5

Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director

GRANDPARENT'S DAY AND ITS MEANING

Many people assume that Grandparents Day resulted from lobbying by florists, greeting card companies and similar businesses. The idea could not be farther from the truth. Grandparents Day is day for celebrating the connections between the generations and its origin was decidedly noncommercial. The holiday has remained fairly true to its roots.

The roots of Grandparent's Day go back to 1956 and a West Virginia mother named Marian McQuade. While helping to organize a community celebration for those over 80, she became aware of the many nursing home residents who were forgotten by their families. She wanted a holiday to bring attention to these forgotten individuals and to honor all grandparents. In 1973, West Virginia became the first state to have such a day. Ms. Quade and others then shifted their efforts to the national level, achieving success in 1978. Grandparents Day is a real national holiday or observance, celebrated each year on the first Sunday after Labor Day, although it is not classified as a federal holiday.

The purpose of the holiday is to honor grandparents, to give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children and to help children become aware of the strength, information and guidance older people can offer.

Today, many families celebrate Grandparents Day with family get-togethers. These need not be elaborate. A simple meal and time to visit will please most grandparents. Grandparents Day is also a great time to share some family stories or look at old pictures. Board games, card games and puzzles are fun low-key amusements. If the family would like an outing, a few venues mainly museums host annual Grandparents Day celebrations.

Remember that one of the purposes of the holiday is to give grandparents a chance to show their love for their grandchildren. If it doesn't work out for you to see your grandchildren, *Grandparents Day* is a great excuse for you to phone them, email or text them, FaceTime or Skype with them, or even write them a old fashioned letter.



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5 STEPS TO PREPARE FOR MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

I'm sure you've met those annoyingly proactive people who have all their holiday shopping done by Fourth of July. Most of us are not those type of people, but Medicare Open Enrollment is certainly one time when it's necessary to be prepared well in advance. Medicare Open Enrollment runs from October 15 through December 7 each year, and when it comes to researching and comparing all available options, sooner is always better than later.

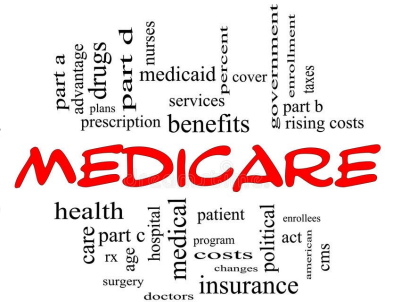
Now is the perfect time to do some research and make a few preliminary calls to get an idea of what changes need to be made, if any. Preparing before the enrollment period begins can prevent you from scrambling to get the information you need and making knee-jerk decisions. Try to complete at least one of these six steps each week and you'll be ready to tackle open enrollment in no time.

1. Make sure your familiarize yourself with the different parts of Medicare and how they work together. If you come across any terminology you don't understand, brush up at the Medicare.gov website.
2. Are you in a Medicare Advantage Plan? Is that still working well? Make a point of opening all mail from the private insurance provider that arrives in the September and October so you can be on top of any changes to premiums, deductibles, copays and provider groups.
3. If you have a Medicare Supplemental Insurance policy (also knows as Medigap), make sure you pay attention to any premium increases. At some point, you may need to consider switching to a different policy, dropping this policy or switching to an Advantage Plan.
4. If you have been spending a lot of money out of pocket on hospital visits and doctor's appointments (because you don't have a Medigap or Medicare Advantage Plan), now is the time to add up those costs and decide whether a different mix of coverage is a more affordable solution. It's also worth looking into public programs that can assist with covering costs, such as Medicaid, a state Medicare Savings Program or the "Extra Help" program.
5. Go to Medicare.gov and look up the location of your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). There are offices in every county. All of their services are offered free of charge.

The part of the equation is making sure that you have up-to-date information about your health status. Make sure you have a current list of all medications and know exactly why you are taking each one. If any of your prescriptions are brand name, are there generic equivalents available?

Help yourself by making sure you are ahead of the curve. The holiday season ramps up quickly and even twenty minutes of preparation here and there can save you hours of frantic work in December.

Kansas Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's) are designated as counseling sites and will be holding Medicare events during open enrollment.



READ YOUR MAIL

Everyday you receive a lot of mail and we recommend that our readers open and read it. Not reading your mail could have a negative impact on your services or benefits and can even have legal consequences.

Definitely take the time to open and read mail from the following organizations: **Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services (KDADS)**, **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**, **Kansas Department of Health & Human Services (KDHE)**, **Division of Children & Families (DCF)**, **Social Security Administration (SSA)**, **KanCare Clearinghouse**, and your insurance companies (medical, homeowners and vehicle).

If you have difficulty understanding your mail, contact the organization who sent it. Many times they have a customer service number listed on the correspondence.



CAREGIVER SERVICES - A Program Designed For The Caregiver

The population of older Americans continues to increase and so does the need for caregivers in our society. More than 39 million adults serve as caregivers.

Everyday families make tremendous sacrifices to provide care and support needed by their older relatives. However, it is often provided at a significant cost to the caregivers in terms of stress, physical and mental strain, feelings of frustration and feeling overwhelmed.

Whether you are expecting to become a caregiver or have been thrust into the role overnight, it is useful to know where you can obtain information and assistance.

Eligibility:

- An adult family member or other individual who is an informal provider of in-home services to a older adult, 60 years of age or older.
- Grandparent, age 55 or older caring for a child younger than 19, lives with the child and acts as the primary caregiver because the biological or adoptive parents are unable or not willing to care for the child.
- A grandparent or relative by blood or marriage who is age 55 or older providing care for an adult age 19 to 59, that has a disability. The caregiver cannot be the parent of the adult with a disability.

What type of help is available:

- Respite
- Grandparent Support
- Homemaker/Attendant Care
- Adult Day Care

The Area Agency on Aging administers programming that provides respite services along with other types of assistance to the Caregiver. If you find yourself in a caregiving role and need assistance, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

This program is funded by the Older Americans Act through the Department for Aging and Disability Services.

988 is a new 3-digit code for the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Get direct access to compassionate care and support for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress in three ways:



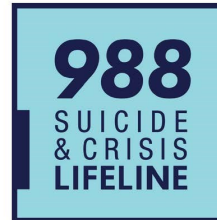
Call 988



Text 988



<http://988lifeline.org>



Open Enrollment Period:



The Medicare Open Enrollment Period, often called the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), is the time when individuals can change their Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare Part D plans. This is also the time to switch from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage (or vice versa).



Open Enrollment Period



Coverage begins

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS AFTER READING UP ON OPEN ENROLLMENT AT MEDICARE.GOV; GIVE US A CALL AND SPEAK WITH A SHICK (SENIOR HEALTH INSURANCE COUNSELING FOR KANSANS) COUNSELOR AT 913-573-8531.

REFRIGERATOR CARE TIPS

BEST TEMPERATURE:

Refrigerator - 40° F or below

Freezer - 0° F or below

Avoid "Overpacking." Cold air must move around refrigerated foods to keep them chilled.

KEEP IT SMELLING FRESH

An open box of baking soda is a great homemade air freshener to absorb unpleasant smells and keep your fridge odor-free.

Crumble a brown paper bag into a ball and place it along side fruits and vegies in the crisper for odor protection.

SERVING COLD FOOD: When serving food at a BBQ, picnic or buffet, keep foods cold by nesting dishes in ows of ice or use small serving trays and replace the food often. Always refrigerate food within 2 hours - 1 hour when the temperature is above 90° F.

5 STEPS TO A CLEAN FRIDGE

1. Remove all items in the refrigerator, tossing any that are old.
2. Remove drawers and place in a sink of hot, soapy water.
3. Wipe down the inside of the fridge with a mild soap or a mixture of equal parts vinegar and water.
4. Wash the soaking drawers, rinse, dry and return them to the refrigerator.
5. Now you are ready to put everything neatly back.



HALLOWEEN FUN FACTS:

- Halloween is the 2nd most commercially successful holiday behind Christmas.
- Jack-O-Lanterns originated in Ireland where people place candles in hallowed-out turnips to keep away spirits and ghosts.
- Bobbing for apples is thought to have originated from the roman harvest festival that honors Pamona, the goddess of fruit trees.
- Tootsie Rolls were the first wrapped penny candy in America.
- Halloween was brought to North America by immigrants from Europe who would celebrate the harvest around a bon-fire, share ghost stories, sing, dance and tell fortunes.



Silver Haired Legislative Update

The Silver Haired Legislature held its Executive Board meeting on Wednesday, July 27, 2022. At this meeting, many issues submitted from the Planning Service Areas across the state were discussed. From those issues, the Executive Board voted and dwindled them down to the six issues mentioned below.

- Support for the expansion of Medicaid in Kansas. Medicaid expansion would significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care for hospitals and other medical facilities across the state.
- Continued support for the KDOT Public Transportation program in Kansas. Public transportation provides an important safety net for senior citizens to have access to medical services, shopping for food and other needed supplies which are important for their quality of life.
- Support for Broadband Expansion and training in Kansas. As broadband is becoming essential for many tasks and vital services, Kansas seniors need education and training on using the internet.
- Support the Expansion of Medicinal Cannabis for use in Kansas. Currently 36 states and the District of Columbia have legalized the medical use of cannabis under various circumstances, including all four states that boarder Kansas.
- Support increased funding for the Senior Care Act Program in Kansas. With the Kansas 65+ population seeing an increase due to the arrival of the "baby boomers," it is obvious the need for Senior Care Act funding will continue to rise.
- Support the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) request to equalize the sales tax each AAA pays for items needed to provide services to their clients. Currently, eight of the eleven AAAs are not exempt from state sales tax on products they must purchase. Because of this disparity, thousands of dollars that could be used for additional services for senior clients must instead be paid by the AAA to the state in the form of sales taxes.

These issues will be presented to the full membership at the Annual Session where they will go through a three-step process to ascertain the approval of the membership. The issues that receive favorable passage will then be sent to the Kansas Legislature for their consideration during the 2023 Legislative Session.

NEWSLETTER DONATIONS ENCOURAGED

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.

Help us continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor.

*Donations should be made payable to:
Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging
849 North 47th Street, Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102.*

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

Names are listed in alphabetical order.

Patricia Cox

In Memory of Herman and Ophelia Garcia

Betty Goff

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

HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS DISRUPTED OUR LIVES

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted every aspect of our lives. This is especially true for older adults who are a highest risk if they contract the virus. As we look at aging health in a pandemic world, we need to assess the changes that the past nearly two years have had on our lives, our health and our relationships. We need to find new ways that community resources can help us continue to adapt, reset and reconnect.

When reconnecting with our families and friends after time apart, it is important that we take stock of the physical and emotional changes that may have occurred during the pandemic. Some of these changes, especially those that reduce our health and well-being, may require extra attention to resolve, so it is important to know where to begin.



Reconnecting with family and friends after time apart due to COVID-19 can bring joy but can also highlight changes in our overall well-being and theirs. When interacting with older loved ones and friends for the first time in a while, it is important to look for physical and emotional changes that may have developed in the time since you last saw one another.

Physical changes include those that affect vision, hearing, mobility and, ultimately, the ability to care for oneself. If you notice that you or an older loved one is walking more slowly, or having more difficulty seeing, hearing or reading, it may be time to act. Depending on how significant any changes you notice may be, a trip to the doctor's office may help determine the full impact and provide next steps.

Take a look at your home or the home of an older family member or friend. Are there any rugs or other items on the floor that may cause a fall? Is there enough lighting to safely navigate the home at night when it is dark? Look with an eye toward safety concerns and consider whether you or the person you are concerned about is willing to make simple modifications such as adding light fixtures, replacing doorknobs, or installing grab bars in the bathroom or railings along stairways.

Are you or the older adults in your life finding it harder to keep up with daily tasks? An older adult's ability to perform simple chores in the home, prepare nutritious meals, manage medication or handle their finances may have changed during the pandemic. As a result, many older adults have developed a need for in-home support such as housekeeping, meal preparation and personal care activities such as bathing and dressing.

If you are finding that these scenarios are all too familiar, you should contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531 for help.



Send an email to:
60Plus@wycokck.org
with your request.

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Or visit our playlist on the Unified Government's YouTube Channel

Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

NO-PEEK CHICKEN (5 ingredients)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (6 oz) package Uncle Ben's long grain wild rice
- 1 (10.25 oz) can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (10.25 oz) can cream of celery soup
- 1 1/2 cans water (use empty soup can)
- 1 1/2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper (to taste)

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Lightly grease 9x13-inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray
- Combine rice, soups and water in baking dish and mix together until combined.
- Place chicken on top of rice and season with salt and pepper.
- Cover the dish with aluminum foil and seal tightly.
- Bake for 1 hour and 30 minutes, or until rice has absorbed all liquid.
- No peeking! Keep the dish covered while baking. I know it's tempting but I promise it's worth it.
- Serve and enjoy!



SPOOKTACULAR

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- AUTUMN
- BAKE
- BLACK CAT
- BOBBING FOR APPLES
- BONFIRE
- CANDY CORN
- CIDER
- COLUMBUS DAY
- CORN STALK
- COSTUMES
- FALLBACK
- FOOTBALL
- GHOST
- GHOULS
- GRANDPARENTS
- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST MOON
- HAUNTED HOUSES
- HAYRIDE
- JACK O LANTERN
- LABOR DAY
- LEAVES
- LIBRA
- MARSHMALLOWS
- PATRIOT DAY
- POCORN BALLS
- SCARECROW
- SCORPIO
- SKELETON
- SPIDERS
- SQUASH
- TRICK OR TREAT
- VIRGO
- WEENIE ROAST
- WITCHES

X	A	S	H	P	M	M	D	N	X	L	S	B	P	L	S	O	L	B	V	S	U	F	E	T
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A	C	S	E	L	P	P	A	R	O	F	G	N	I	B	B	O	B	W	H	U	E	L	Y	Q

TELL US ABOUT YOU

GENDER: ___ MALE ___ FEMALE **AGE GROUP:** ___ UNDER 60 ___ 60+

MARITAL STATUS: ___ SINGLE ___ MARRIED ___ WIDOWED ___ DIVORCED

RACE: ___ AFRICAN AMERICAN ___ HISPANIC ___ AMERICAN INDIAN/NATIVE ALASKAN
 ___ ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER ___ NON-MINORITY CAUCASIAN OTHER: _____

RESIDENCE: ___ SENIOR RESIDENCE ___ OWN HOME ___ WITH FAMILY ___ ASSISTED LIVING
 ___ NURSING FACILITY ___ OTHER: _____

HOUSEHOLD INCOME: ___ BELOW \$20,000 ___ OVER \$20,000 **RESIDENTIAL ZIP CODE:** _____

REASON YOU CONTACTED US

- ___ **INFORMATION** - You received information on a single topic.
- ___ **REFERRAL** - You received a referral to a community service provider.
- ___ **ASSISTANCE** - You received assistance on how to access needed services in your community.
- ___ **OPTIONS COUNSELING** - You received information on service options, provider options, or other options which helped you make an informed decision on your choices. This included a follow-up contact from our staff.
- ___ **ASSESSMENT** - You received a functional assessment to determine your functional eligibility for Home and Community Based Services.
- ___ **CAREGIVER SERVICES** - You received services as a caregiver OR grandparent raising your grandchild(ren).
- ___ **CARE or Nursing Home Admission** - You received a CARE assessment for nursing home admission.
- ___ **CASE MANAGEMENT** - A case manager met with you to help set up in-home services.
- ___ **HOME DELIVERED MEALS** (Meals on Wheels) - You receive: ___ Hot ___ Frozen
- ___ **CONGREGATE MEAL SITE** - You eat at one of our nutrition sites for lunch.
- ___ **LEGAL SERVICES** - You received legal assistance through Kansas Legal Services.
- ___ **TRANSPORTATION SERVICE** - You used either: ___ Assisted Services ___ Demand Response
- ___ **OTHER:** (Please Specify) - _____

HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH:

THE OVERALL SERVICE YOU RECEIVED?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE COURTESY OF OUR STAFF?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR STAFF WITH YOUR ISSUE.	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE HELPFULNESS OF OUR STAFF?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED.	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE PROFESSIONALISM OF OUR STAFF.	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
WAS YOUR CONCERN ADDRESSED?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
THE TIME IT TOOK OUR STAFF TO ASSIST YOU?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU OUR SERVICES?	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply

If not, explain. _____

IF YOU HAD A NEED OR CONCERN THAT WE COULD NOT ASSIST WITH, PLEASE SPECIFY YOUR UNMET NEED.

ANY COMMENTS OR WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICE?

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A FOLLOW-UP CALL TO DISCUSS ANY OTHER CONCERNS, PLEASE LEAVE US YOUR NAME, PHONE NUMBER.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

RETURN SURVEY TO: WY/LV AAA 849 NORTH 47TH STREET, SUITE C, KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66102

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31, 2022

WYANDOTTE/LEAVENWORTH AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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Web: www.wycokck.org/aging
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SEPTEMBER >>>

LABOR DAY

Monday, September 5, 2022
Unified Government Offices Closed

GRANDPARENTS DAY

Sunday, September 11, 2022

PATRIOT DAY

Sunday, September 11, 2022

MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Thursday, September 16, 2022

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.

OCTOBER >>>

COLUMBUS DAY

Monday, October 10, 2022

HALLOWEEN

Monday, October 31, 2022



Linda Ramirez, Editor