

# THE COMMUNICATOR

A Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging Publication

2023 - September/October

Volume 31, Issue 5

Ruth E. Jones, Executive Director

## STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO PREPARE FOR MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

I'm sure you've met those annoyingly proactive people who have all their holiday shopping done by the 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 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 hurried 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 you 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](https://www.medicare.gov) website.
- 2) Are you in a Medicare Advantage Plan? Is that still working well? Make a point of opening all mail from your private insurance provider that arrives in September and October so you can be on top of any changes to premiums, deductibles and copays.
- 3) If you have a Medicare Supplemental Insurance policy (also known as a 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](https://www.medicare.gov) and look up the location of your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). There are offices for every county. All of their services are offered free of charge.
- 6) 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.



*Area Agencies on Aging are designated as counseling sites and will be holding Medicare events during open enrollment. You may contact the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531 and inquire about upcoming Medicare events.*

### IN THIS EDITION:

- Protect Your Eyes From Sun Damage
- Affordable Connectivity Project (ACP)
- Fall Prevention Awareness
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- Life With Low Vision
- Public Hearing/Town Hall Meeting Held
- Do You Have Things To Rid Your House Of, But Don't Want To Simply Throw Them Away?
- Recipe - Shrimp Pasta Alfredo

## PROTECT YOUR EYES FROM SUN DAMAGE

*newsinhealth.nih.gov*

Most of us know that too much sun can cause sunburn and skin damage. But did you know that the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can also harm your eyes? UV light is invisible. It can't be seen by the human eye. But it can still damage your vision.



Sunlight has a mixture of both visible and invisible rays, or waves. The long waves, like radio waves, are harmless to people. But shorter waves like UV light can cause problems. There are two types of UV rays. UVA which can cause wrinkles and aging of the skin. UVB is responsible for sunburns and most UV-related cancers.

Several eye problems have been linked to UV light as well. These include cataracts, which are cloudy areas in the eye's lens. Cataracts can make vision blurry, hazy or less colorful. Excess UV light has also been linked to cancers of the eyelid.

Wearing sunglasses and a wide brimmed hat is a safe and easy way to protect your eyes from UV light. To protect your eyes from sun damage, choose sunglasses that block at least 99% of both UVA and UVB rays. These might also be marked with UV400 rating.

Check your local weather forecast for the UV index, which shows the intensity of UV rays. Even on cloudy days, the UV index can be high and potentially harm your eyes.

# MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT Runs October 15th through December 7th

## AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more.

The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

If you participate in any of the following programs, you automatically qualify for the ACP:

- SNAP
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- WIC
- Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits
- Or Lifeline (through the State)

[Apply Now At AffordableConnectivity.gov](https://affordableconnectivity.gov)



## FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS

**Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Prevent falls with these simple fall-prevention measures, from reviewing your medications to hazard proofing your home.**

*Fall prevention may not seem like a lively topic, but it's important. As you get older physical changes, health conditions and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions make falls more likely. In fact, falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults. Still, fear of falling doesn't need to rule your life. Instead, consider six simple fall prevention strategies:*



### 1) Make an appointment with your doctor.

- ✓ Make a list of your prescription and over-the-counter medications and supplements, or bring them with you to the appointment. Your doctor can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling.
- ✓ If you have fallen before, write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time.
- ✓ Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Your doctor may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style as well.

### 2) Keep moving.

- ✓ Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your doctor's OK, consider activities such as walking, gentle exercises that involve slow and graceful dance-like movements.
- ✓ If you avoid physical activity because you're afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your doctor.

### 3) Wear sensible shoes.

- ✓ Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall-prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall. Wear properly fitting sturdy shoes with nonskid soles.

### 4) Remove home hazards.

- ✓ Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical and phone cords from walkways.
- ✓ Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- ✓ Use nonslip mats in your bathtub and showers.

### 5) Light up your living space.

- ✓ Place a lamp within reach of your bed for middle-of-the-night needs.
- ✓ Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- ✓ Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

### 6) Use assistive devices.

- ✓ Hand rails, nonslip treads for bare wood steps, a raised toilet seat and grab bars for the shower or tub can assist you with unsteadiness.

The Mayo Clinic

## National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In October, Americans observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month by paying tribute to the accomplishments of the men and women with disabilities whose work helps keep the nation's economy strong and by reaffirming their commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens.



This effort to educate the public about the issues related to disability and employment began in 1945, when Congress enacted Public Law 176, declaring the first week of October each year as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. Some 25 years later, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.



## LIFE WITH LOW VISION

Some vision problems can't be fixed with glasses, contact lenses, or even surgery. This is known as low vision. It can make everyday tasks difficult. Your low vision may make it hard to read or drive. You might have trouble recognizing people's faces or telling colors apart.



Low vision is more common in older adults. It can be caused by many different eye conditions. One of the most common causes is age-related macular degeneration. This eye disease can blur your central vision. Other diseases that can cause low vision include cataracts, where the lens of the eye becomes cloudy. Glaucoma, which damages the eye's optic nerve, can also cause untreatable vision loss.

Eye doctors can check for low vision during an eye exam. They'll give you drops to widen, or dilate, your pupil. This allows them to check for conditions that can cause low vision.

Unfortunately, low vision is often permanent. Treatment options depend on what's causing your low vision. But there are things you can do to make the most of your remaining sight.

If your vision loss is minor, you may find that brighter lights help. Wearing anti-glare sunglasses may also help you see better. A vision specialist, or Ophthalmologist can show you how to use technologies and magnifying devices that aid with vision loss. They can also share resources to help you cope with vision loss. Contact an Ophthalmologist if you notice you are experiencing low vision.

## PUBLIC HEARING/TOWN HALL HELD

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging in partnership with the local Silver Haired Legislature hosted a *Public Hearing/Town Hall* meeting at Victory Hills Baptist Church. Sherri Grogan, Leavenworth County delegate coordinated a very informative agenda that included presentations from several of our local Commissioners and Representatives who were in attendance. Commissioners Melissa Bynum, Tom Burroughs, Andrew Davis and Chuck Stites along with Representatives Valdenia Winn, Melissa Oropeza, Timothy Johnson and Lynn Melton all who spoke to the attendees regarding local and state issues. Those who attended heard updates on programs, budget and ballot measures, and services related to seniors. The meeting concluded with a Q&A session and a hot lunch.



## DO YOU HAVE THINGS TO RID YOUR HOUSE OF, BUT DON'T WANT TO SIMPLY THROW THEM AWAY?

De-clutter and do good by bringing your still-good clothing, furniture and other household items to donate to our charity partners who will be on hand to put it to good use. Bring your old tires to recycle and paper to shred.

DE-CLUTTER AND DO GOOD AT THE NEXT

# UN-DUMPSTER DAY

## DONATION DRIVE

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2023 @ 8:00AM - NOON**  
4TH AND MINNESOTA,  
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

FREE PAPER SHREDDING

FREE TIRE DISPOSAL

FIND OUT MORE AT [REUSEFULL.ORG](http://REUSEFULL.ORG).







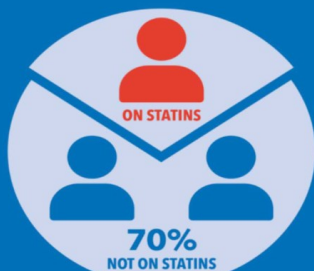
### ARE YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONE EXPERIENCING ANY OF THESE?

Unplanned Weight Loss	Loss of Appetite	Not Able to Eat or Only Able to Eat Small Amounts	Feeling Weak or Tired	Swelling or Fluid Accumulation
				

TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

**Starting a statin even after age 75 may lower the risk of developing dementia.**

**BUT WE DON'T REALLY KNOW.**  
Results from PREVENTABLE will help us understand.



[www.preventabletrial.org](http://www.preventabletrial.org)


The #PREVENTABLEtrial is one of the largest research studies in adults 75 years or older. The study will test if taking a statin could help prevent dementia in older adults. Study participants will contribute valuable information on how we age and may benefit from additional memory and physical function monitoring. Compensation is available for those who participate!

#### Who is eligible?

- Adults over 75 years of age
- Those NOT currently taking statin medication.
- Those without a history of stroke or heart attack.

Find out more by contacting Erica Lower, Project Coordinator at [elower@kumc.edu](mailto:elower@kumc.edu) or 913-588-6052.

*In Memory of*  
**Gilbert E. Tinoco**



## Area Agency on Aging Media Relations



Like  
Subscribe  
and  
Share

  
  
nextdoor

Donate to Meals on Wheels!  
<https://pay.payitgov.com/wyco>

**Join our Facebook Group!**  
Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

- Find Out About Upcoming Events
- See Flyers on Our Services
- Learn Fun Facts About Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

---

Topics Covered on Our YouTube Channel:  
Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

- Medicare vs. Medicaid
- Social Security Disability in Kansas
- Introduction to the SHICK Program
- Identity Theft

Go to Unified Government's YouTube Channel

- Select Playlists Tab
- Click Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging

---

**Want to learn more about our services?**

- Go to <https://www.wycock.org/Home>
- Select the Departments Tab
- Click Area Agency on Aging

## SHRIMP PASTA ALFREDO

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups uncooked bow-tie pasta
- 2 cups frozen peas
- 1 pound peeled and deveined cooked medium shrimp, tails removed
- 1 jar (15 oz) alfredo sauce
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

### DIRECTIONS:

- In a Dutch oven, cook pasta according to package directions, adding peas during the last 3 minutes of cooking; drain and return to pan.
- Stir in shrimp and sauce; heat thoroughly over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.



Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- APPLE CIDER
- BLACK CAT
- BOB FOR APPLES
- BONFIRE
- CANDY
- CANDY CORN
- COLUMBUS DAY
- CORNOCOPIA
- CORNSTALK
- COSTUME
- DEDUCTIBLE
- END OF SUMMER
- FALL BEGINS
- FOOTBALL
- GOBLINS
- GRANDPARENTS DAY
- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST MOON
- HAUNTED HOUSES
- JACK O LANTERN
- LABOR DAY
- LIBRA
- MEDICARE
- OPEN ENROLLMENT
- PATRIOT DAY
- POPCORN BALLS
- PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN
- PUMPKIN PATCH
- RAKE
- SCARECROW
- SKELETON
- SPIDERS
- SQUASH
- TRICK OR TREAT
- VIRGO
- WITCHES

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

**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 regarding 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    \_\_\_ Unified Government Transit (*Demand Response*)

\_\_\_ **OTHER:** (Please Specify) - \_\_\_\_\_

**HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH:**

<b>THE OVERALL SERVICE YOU RECEIVED?</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE COURTESY OF OUR STAFF?</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR STAFF WITH YOUR ISSUE.</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE HELPFULNESS OF OUR STAFF?</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED.</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE PROFESSIONALISM OF OUR STAFF.</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>WAS YOUR CONCERN ADDRESSED?</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>THE TIME IT TOOK OUR STAFF TO ASSIST YOU?</b>	___ Very Satisfied	___ Satisfied	___ Not Satisfied	___ Does Not Apply
<b>HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU OUR SERVICES?</b>	___ 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, 2023**



# 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  
Web: www.wycokck.org/aging  
**60Plus...Call on Us!**

PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
KANSAS CITY, MO  
PERMIT NO. 423

## SEPTEMBER >>>

### LABOR DAY

*Monday, September 4, 2023*  
**Unified Government Offices Closed**

### GRANDPARENTS DAY

*Sunday, September 10, 2023*

### PATRIOT DAY

*Monday, September 11, 2023*

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 9, 2023*

### HALLOWEEN

*Tuesday, October 31, 2023*



Linda Ramirez, Editor