



The SAGE AGE

Areawide Aging Agency

Advancing the Independence of Senior Adults in Central Oklahoma

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A Publication of Areawide Aging Agency



Blair Schoeb, (second from right) receives check from the Masonic Charities Foundation to provide seniors with needed assistance. Presenting the check are from left to right rich Brierre OARC Chairman, Michael L. Dixon, Masons Grant Master, and far right, John Logan, Executive Director Masonic cHARITY Foundation.

Areawide Receives Funds From Masonic Charities Foundation

The Masonic Charities Foundation granted \$783,260 on December 10th to the Oklahoma Association of Area Agencies on Aging. These dollars will be distributed to the eleven Area Agencies on Aging in Oklahoma. The funding was presented to assist older Oklahomans with the following: home safety improvements (ramps, and grab bars), utilities, dentures, hearing aids and glasses in Oklahoma, Cleveland, Canadian, and Logan Counties. In 2018,

Areawide was able to help 323 persons with these services through the Masonic Charities Foundation's grant. The Area Agencies on Aging have received funds for over ten years from the Masonic Charities Foundation and are very grateful for the lives they have been able to improve.

Areawide Business News

The Sage Age is a quarterly publication of Areawide Aging Agency, Inc. If you would like to receive a copy of the Sage Age, please call (405)942-8500.

Editor: Kathy Langley

Silver-Haired Legislature Following Senior Related Bills

The Oklahoma Silver-Haired Legislature (OSHL), has been working hard to bring awareness to legislators of our older Oklahomans via new bills, advocating at the Capitol and sending letters. The following bills have been the top focus for the OSHL.

“House Bill 1205 (Rep. Bush and Sen. McCortney)- Creates the Oklahoma Home and Community Based Services Ombudsman Program Task Force to study and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding creation and design of a program to protect the rights of persons receiving home-and community-based care and services. The measure passed the House of Representatives 91-4. This is a Silver-Haired Legislature priority request bill.

House Bill 1902 (Rep. McEntire and Sen. Simpson) and Senate Bill 280 (Sen. Simpson and Rep. McEntire) – These bills contain major nursing home reforms, including long-needed increases in Direct Care Staffing and the replacement of the flawed “Focus on Excellence” incentive payment system with a measurable plan.

House Bill 1947 (Rep. Dustin Roberts and Sen. Montgomery) – Requires motor vehicle operators to use vehicle lights at all times during rain. This is a past request of the Silver-Haired Legislature and important for safety and visibility.

House Bill 2671 (Reps. Wallace and Fetgatter and Sen. Bice) --Amends State statute relating to Personal Income Tax Refund checkoff programs if certain levels of contributions are not met. The bill exempts the Oklahoma Silver-Haired Legislature – Excellence in State Government Revolving Fund – from the minimum contribution requirement.

Senate Bill 891 (Sen. Scott) and

House Bill 1262 (Rep. Hilbert and Sen. Leewright) – SB 891 would modify the sales tax exemption for prosthetics to include exempting hearing aids.

Senate Bill 990 (Sen. Scott and Rep. Boles) – Prohibits providers of Medicare Supplemental insurance plans from increasing premium rates other than during a specific Medicare Open Enrollment period. This is a Silver-Haired Legislature priority bill and also has the support of the Oklahoma Insurance Department. The bill passed the Senate” (OAP). *The following bill information was taken from the “Oklahoma Aging Partnership 2019 Legislative Agenda” as of March 7th.*

Caregiver Survival Skills Conference Date Set

The 21st Annual Caregiver Survival Skills Conference: *Finding Your Joy*, will be held Friday, June 14th, from 9:00 am until 2:45 pm, at Church of the Servant in Oklahoma City (13434 N. MacArthur Blvd.).

This year’s theme, Finding Your Joy, will feature the different ways caregivers can find joy in their lives. The conference will include presentations from Duane Snavely, OKC Improv, Nikki Buckelew and Julie Davis, a panel of caregivers and Pet Therapy with Shotgun.

The conference will provide lunch as well as a resource fair with representatives from over 25 local organizations & services in the community. There is a suggested donation of \$10.00 to attend the conference. This conference is sponsored by Mercy Hospital, Home Instead Senior Care, Concordia Life Care Community, Sunbeam Family Services and Areawide Aging Agency. For more information on becoming a vendor, contact Robert Morris at (405) 521-1963.

Join us for a day of caregiver self-care and an opportunity to meet other caregivers and learn that you are not alone. To register for the conference, email okcaregiver@gmail.com or call (405) 633-0377. Registration is open until June 7, 2019.

Education Pivotal in Preventing Abuse of Vulnerable Adults

Most people have a clear concept of abuse as it relates to physical harm. It is a general consensus that such things as hitting, shoving, and scratching are all forms of physical abuse, as all of these constitute an action by which intentional pain or harm are inflicted. Also, sexual abuse has come to be more defined and socially unacceptable, notwithstanding being criminal, due to public awareness and outrage.

Title 43A of the Oklahoma State Statute defines abuse as causing or permitting:

- The infliction of physical pain, injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, unreasonable restraint or confinement, or mental anguish, or
- The deprivation of nutrition, clothing, shelter, health care, or other care or services without which serious physical or mental injury is likely to occur to a vulnerable adult by a caretaker or other person providing services to a vulnerable adult.

Unfortunately, less obvious forms of abuse are inflicted upon many vulnerable residents of long-term care facilities on a daily basis. One example is the substandard care bearing consequences of immobilization, incontinence, pressure sores, and dehydration. Without proper monitoring, abusers may try to place blame on the victim (resident) by making claims that the resident is refusing care or being uncooperative. Evidence of such abuse may be difficult to detect before extensive harm is inflicted. Something as simple as a container of water that has now sat for two days, warm, and not appealing to the resident, may discourage a resident from remaining hydrated. Of course, the

resident may request fresh water, but many have difficulty in communicating their needs and preferences.

Oklahoma Law defines verbal abuse as “the use of words, sounds, or other communication including, but not limited to, gestures, actions or behaviors, by a caretaker or other persons providing services to a vulnerable adult that are likely to cause a reasonable person to experience humiliation, intimidation, fear, shame, or degradation”.

Once again, most people agree that screaming, cursing, or making lewd gestures toward someone else would constitute an abusive act. Yet, many embrace less obvious acts of verbal abuse as socially acceptable, or even normal. Some of these appear in the form of disgusted grunts or exaggerated exhales, while assisting a resident. Shaking one’s fin-

ger at a resident or making comments such as “you are just being childish”, or “acting like a baby”, are degrading and may elicit feelings of shame or intimidation.

Education that provides awareness and clarity to these definitions of Oklahoma Law, is pivotal in effecting any sustained change in preventing these forms of abuse and neglect. LTC Ombudsman assist this process by educating residents of their right to receive quality care and live in an environment that improves or maintains the quality of their physical and mental health, which includes freedom from abuse and neglect. Community education is also available, along with education of facility staff through In-Service training. Observation and correction are strong coaching tools implemented by the Ombudsman during routine facility visits.



During a recent trip to Washington D.C., Areawide’s CEO, Blair Schoeb (right) met with Oklahoma’s Congressional members. Shown from one such meeting, (l-r) Clark Miller, Director; Lisa James, and Oklahoma Senator James Lanford.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Is a Growing Trend

by S. Grace Williams

The trend where grandparents step in and care for their grandchildren when their child is struggling with substance abuse, serious mental or physical illness, incarceration or death that leaves him/her unable to parent properly, continues to rise. “For every child in foster care with relatives, 19 are being raised outside of foster care by grandparents or other relatives” -[Generations United](#)



using data from 2016. This is particularly true in Oklahoma which has consistently maintained one of the highest number of grandparents and great-grandparents raising children in the nation.

It is fantastic for these grandchildren to have the love and support of their grandparent(s) through such difficult times but it’s not easy to decide what is best for the grandchildren. DHS can help you make these decisions and provide support.

In many cases, the parent(s) of your grandchildren do nothing wrong. They may even live with you and the child but, for reasons outside their control, cannot properly or effectively parent. In these situations, it may be possible to come with an agreed guardianship plan subject to the approval of the Court. If this is a possibility, it can be handled in a less restrictive, more informal manner.

If you are concerned that your grandchildren are not receiving the proper care and/or supervision, call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-522-3511. A call to the hotline does not necessarily mean that your grandchildren will be taken away from you or from the child’s parent(s). It is a necessary first step in the fact-finding process. Parental rights receive strong protection under both the Oklahoma and federal constitutions. It takes a strong showing of unfitness be-

fore custody can be removed from a parent and given to a third party, something way stronger than simply: “I can do better for the child.” If you are eligible to be a foster parent, you, as a direct relative, have top priority for your grandchildren to be with but DHS custody is often not necessary especially if you intervene early.

Many times, DHS will establish a “safety plan”.; They will help your child with services to change the behavior and environment that is causing your grandchildren to lack proper care or supervision while your grandchildren remain at home. Your grandchildren and your child will receive referrals to services and support from DHS but will retain custody.

If the behavior or neglect threatening the child is more serious, the worker may place the children with you or another family member while your child is completing these services. If your child doesn’t complete the services correctly then the children may be placed in a guardianship with the current caretaker. This gives the caretaker the power to make medical, educational and other choices like a parent would while your grandchildren live under their guardianship. The guardianship can be revoked if your child later is able to come back and care for your grandchildren but this usually requires a showing that your child has changed their behavior and the environment. In this situation, your grandchildren, child, and the caretaker will receive referrals to services and support from DHS but your grandchildren will still not be in custody of the department.

If the problems in your child’s home are quite serious, then DHS will take the children into custody. DHS will likely still place the children with you if you are eligible for foster care because a kinship placement is top priority. Your child will then have to go through deprived proceedings in juvenile court while they are work-

Trend

Williams, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma

ing their services to demonstrate to the court that their behavior and environment has changed. If they do not complete this process, your child may lose their parental rights and your grandchildren can be adopted or be placed in a guardianship with you or another qualified caretaker.

Unfortunately, sometimes the situation causes grand-parents to choose between their children and grandchildren. For example, if your child is engaging in something illegal, and living with you, you may lose your priority for custody by failing to take action sooner. If your adult child is not in compliance with the safety plan, and DHS feels you're aiding or permitting non-compliance, you may lose custody. The legal issues surrounding these cases are serious and complicated. You should always proceed with caution.

Whether your grandchild is in DHS custody or not, you can access these resources to get the support your family needs:

A DHS worker can help you with:

- Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance for your grandchildren
- Getting copies of your grandchildren's important documents such as the birth certificate, social security card, and shot records
- Supplies -you may qualify for helpful programs that provide food, cash assistance, respite care, diapers, clothes etc.
- Referrals and financial assistance in accessing counseling and legal services

School records should be sent within 3 business days if your grandchild must switch schools

Medicare Recipients Should Have Their New Medicare Cards

All Medicare recipients should now have their new Medicare card. Your new card has a new number that is unique to you, instead of your social security number. These cards use 11 character identifiers that contain both numbers

and letters. These cards are safer and will help protect your identity.

Even though mail out of the new cards is completed, many say they do not have a new card. If you haven't received your card, look around your home for any old or unopened mail. Your new Medicare card will be in a plain white envelope from the Department of Health and Human Services.

If you don't find your card, you can sign into mymedicare.gov to get your number and print your official card or call **1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227)**. There may be something that needs to be corrected, such as your mailing address. You can still use your old card to get health care services until January 1, 2020.

Remember, Medicare will never call you uninvited and ask you to give personal information to get your Medicare number and card. If someone calls you and asks for your Medicare number or personal information, call Medicare at **1-800-633-4227**. Only give your Medicare number to doctors, pharmacists, other health care providers, your insurers, or people you trust to work with Medicare on your behalf.

Donations Received in Honor of Former Agency Director

Charlotte Heard, who served as the first director of Areawide Aging Agency, from 1973 to 1989, passed away March 7, 2019. In 1973, when Areawide was developed, the aging field and network was a fairly new concept. The Older American's Act passed in 1965 and made way for Area Agencies on Aging to exist. Charlotte was a leader in the aging community for many years and her legacy still shapes Areawide today.

Many family and friends have made donations to Areawide in her memory. Those are: Cimarron Capital Associates I, LLC, Development Capital Networks, LLC, Oklahoma Capital Investment Board, Sue Morrison, Mark Huston, Valerie Gulick, Kay E. Slack, Kraetti Epperson and Jean Donovan.

If your grandchildren can remain in the same school, the school district must transport them to school even if their new home is out of the district.

It is important to get the support you and grandchildren need so consider asking DHS to be your ally as you care for your grandchildren.

MEDICARE! There are changes every year. If you need help to understand the changes for 2019, John Vincent will be presenting "How to Manage Medicare for Your Best Health Care in 2019" on May 9 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00p.m. in the Areawide Conference room. Space is limited so call **405 943-4344** to reserve your seat.

Areawide Program News

*Aging Services of
Canadian County*

*Aging Services,
Inc. (Cleveland
County)*

*Aging Services of
Logan County*

*Okla. County
Senior Nutrition
Program*

Embark

Legal Aid

*Mobile Meals of
Okla. County, Inc.*

*Sunbeam Family
Services Caregiver
Fundamentals*

*University of
Central Oklahoma,
Department of
Kinesiology and
Health Studies*

*All Older American's Act
Programs accept donations
which are not required in
order to receive services.*

In addition to providing the Older American Act/Title III programs and services in Cleveland County, **Aging Services Inc. (ASI)** also offers two other programs that may be of special interest to senior adults in the Cleveland County area.

Aging Services Inc. operates a lending closet of durable medical equipment. If circumstances arise that you have a temporary need for a wheel chair, transfer bench, or another piece of medical equipment, give **ASI** a call at 321-3200 and they may be able to help you. **ASI** has a wide variety of items available for loan and are also able to network with several lending closet providers to locate the specific item you need to borrow. Also if you have unwanted medical equipment that is in serviceable/good condition around your house that you no longer need, give **ASI** a call at **405-321-3200**. Staff will be glad to pick up the unwanted/unneeded item/s and you can get a tax deduction for your donation because **Aging Services, Inc.** is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization per Internal Revenue Code and your gift is tax deductible.

Aging Services Inc. also operates an emergency food pantry for county senior adult residents who are in need of food supplies. The SOS/Stock Our Shelves Food Pantry is stocked with shelf stable food items many of which are high in protein such as peanut butter and tuna. **ASI's** pantry is stocked with the generous donations they have received from Saint Mark's Catholic Church. If you live in Cleveland County and you do not have enough food to eat, please call Aging Services Inc. at **405-321-3200** and they will do their very best to help you. They do not want any seniors in Cleveland County to go hungry and they will be there for you.

Logan County Aging Services (LCAS) would like to thank the Logan County Council on Aging for sponsoring the wonderful Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. **LCAS** appreciates the volunteers and all the work they do to make the program run smoothly.

Please make sure you have your reservations in for **LCAS** Annual Health Fair held at Highland Hall. This is a day filled with information, fun, good food and lots of friendships! You won't want to miss it!

Summer heat will be here soon so remember all sites are air conditioned and have plenty of cool drinks! See you at the sites!



EMBARK is pleased to partner with the Areawide Aging Agency to provide transportation to seniors 60 or over.

Let us do the driving! You will enjoy safe and dependable transportation provided by a helpful and friendly driver.

**CONGREGATE MEALS – WEEKLY
GROCERY SHOPPING
MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

EMBARK also offers travel training to assist you in using the fixed-route buses across the metro area, ADA paratransit services through the PLUS program, reduced bus fare on fixed-route service, and the Share-A-Fare discount taxi coupon program for eligible seniors.

Donations are greatly appreciated, but not required. For more information, call **405-297-2583**.

Sunbeam Family Services has promoted quality life for senior adults for more than 40 years. The goal of Sunbeam's Senior Services program is to encourage independence by helping seniors stay active in their lives, connected to their communities and living in their own homes for as long as possible. One way Sunbeam works toward this goal is through the **Caregiver Fundamentals program, CFP** which includes the "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" and "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" programs.

Through the "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" program, Sunbeam supports Oklahomans age 55 and older who live in Oklahoma, Cleveland, Canadian and Logan counties who find themselves raising grandchildren without the presence of parents in the home. Participants are empowered through support groups, school supply assistance, holiday assistance and additional community resources with whom **CFP** connects them.

CFP "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" is an educational series designed to help caregivers reduce stress, improve self-confidence and communication skills and increase decision making abilities. **CFP** is proud to come alongside caregivers to provide support and practical solutions to help caregiver's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

For more information about Sunbeam's Senior Services call **405.609.6551** or visit www.sunbeamfamilyservices.org. To find a support group near you, visit www.sunbeamfamilyservices.org/supportgroups for times and locations.

Stretching daily helps minimize stiffness and contributes to maintaining full range of motion in our joints. Without stretching muscles shorten and will not allow the joint to extend through a full range of motion. Tight muscles are weak muscles that can lead to bad posture and limited mobility. For example, you need full range of motion in your shoulder to reach up and grab something out of the cabinet.

When stretching you want to make sure the muscles are warmed up first. It is important to walk for 5-10 minutes or perform light activity before you start stretching your muscles. This will limit the risk of injury and prepare your muscles for stretching. You should not feel any pain while stretching and if you do, you need to see your doctor.

To properly stretch your muscles, hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds and only stretch far enough to feel tension. Perform the stretch slowly and avoid bouncing to protect your muscles. We recommend stretching every day or as often as you can. Flexibility happens over time and not overnight!

The **Center for Active Living and Learning** offers fitness classes for adults 60 and over in Oklahoma City, Norman, Guthrie, and Piedmont. There is no cost to participants, but donations are welcomed. The **Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL)** classes are led by trained exercise professionals, and are designed to improve balance, strength, and flexibility.

Come see us in one of our classes near you!

Danforth Senior Living Center

5301 N. Meridian
OKC, OK 73112

Days: Tuesday and Thursday
Time: 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Highland Hall

1102 E. Warner Ave.
Guthrie, OK 73044

Days: Monday and Wednesday
Time: 10:15am - 11:15am

McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church

419 S. University Blvd.
Norman, OK 73069

Days: Tuesday and Thursday
Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Northwest Church of Christ

4301 NW 23rd St
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

Days: Wednesday and Friday
Time: 9:30am - 10:30am

Piedmont Church of the Nazarene

2011 Piedmont Rd. North
Piedmont, OK 73078

Days: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Time: 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Woodson Park at Taylor Recreation Center

1115 SW 70th
OKC, OK 73139

Days: Friday
Time: 2:00pm – 3:00pm

For more information, contact:

E-mail call@uco.edu

Call (405) 974-5309

www.ucocall.com

On February 14th, **Agging Services of Canadian County (ASCC)** held a fundraising bake sale at the congregate site in Mustang. **ASCC** also raffled off a queen size afghan and an afghan throw made by senior participants in Mustang. The fundraiser made a little over \$1200.00 for the program. Carolyn Woods won the big afghan and Norma Davis won the afghan throw. Both are participants at the Mustang site.

For more information about senior services in Canadian County, call **405-262-7121**.

**Areawide Board
Members**

Sara Hawkins
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PLLP*

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Permit No. 33

The AAA makes no distinction on the grounds of race, color, age, handicap or national origin in the provision of services, financial aid or other benefits, in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A portion of the project costs are met by State and Federal Older Americans Act funds from OKDHS Aging Service Division.



**Gift in Memory of
Melba and Tommy Kirkpatrick
By
Belinda Jolly**

**Gift in Honor of
Kathy Langley
By
Carol Ann Mitchell**

I would like to honor my elderly family member or other Older Oklahoman by making a fully tax deductible contribution to Areawide Aging Agency.

This gift is *In Memory of* _____

This gift is *In Honor of* _____

Please send an acknowledgement to:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

Please indicate on your check if you wish for your donation to support the printing and mailing of the Sage Age newsletter.