



The SAGE AGE

Areawide Aging Agency

Advancing the Independence of Senior Adults in Central Oklahoma

July 2017 Vol. 31 No. 3

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A Publication of Areawide Aging Agency

Areawide to Host Fundraising Lunch in August

Areawide Aging Agency is hosting a fundraising lunch on Tuesday, August 15, 2017. The luncheon will be at the First Baptist Church of Bethany, 3800 N Mueller, from noon to one. Areawide is dedicated to advancing the dignity and independence of older adults in our community. Come join us as we celebrate our love of seniors. To make a reservation or be a sponsor, e-mail jschneider@areawideaging.org or call 405-942-8500 by August 1st.

The 2017- 2018 Areawide Senior Resource Directory is now available.

Call 405 942-8500 or come by Areawide, 4101 Perimeter Center Drive, to request a copy. There is a suggested donation of \$5.00 for the directory. A donation is not required to receive the directory.

A Big Thank You to EMBARK

Areawide announced in the April issue that we were going to a twice year publication in order to save printing and mailing costs. EMBARK (Oklahoma City transportation provider and Areawide's grantee for transportation services for seniors in Oklahoma County) has graciously offered to print two issues of the Sage Age at no cost to Areawide. EMBARK has printed this July issue and will print the January issue as well. These issues of the Sage Age will not be mailed, but will be distributed through our funded programs and health fairs and other events Areawide attends.

We greatly appreciate EMBARK's offer and willingness to help us to continue to provide information of interest to seniors in our four county area. We also thank Marilyn Dillion, EMBARK employee and the Project Director for the Title III transportation service for making this possible.



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

The Body Works Harder in Summer Outdoor Temperatures

When temperatures start warming up people do more outdoor activities. Unfortunately, when temperatures start to get hotter and hotter our bodies must work harder and harder to keep us cool. The blood in our bodies starts to flow to the skin to release heat, which takes away from working muscles. This results in the body working harder than normal to keep us moving. In the humid Oklahoma weather, humidity decreases the body's ability to keep cool. Eventually, with prolonged exposure to heat and humidity, the cooling systems of the body fail and heat-related illness can set in. The symptoms of heat-related illness can vary and it's very important to recognize them.

Some heat-related illnesses you may experience include:

- Heat cramps – Heat cramps are painful muscle contractions.
- Heat exhaustion – Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, headache, weakness, and cold clammy skin.
- Heatstroke – Symptoms include confusion, irritability, heart rhythm problems, dizziness, nausea, visual problems, and fatigue.

If you or your workout partners are experiencing these symptoms, you should seek medical attention immediately. Heat exhaustion and heatstroke are serious issues that can cause brain damage, organ failure, or death.

You can beat the heat by following these simple steps.

- Check the forecast and avoid exercising when the temperature is 80 degrees or hotter.
- Get acclimated to the heat and know your fitness level. To get acclimated to the heat, gradually spend more time outside when the temperatures are higher. Don't start right away with

extended periods of time in the heat.

- Dress appropriately – Wear lightweight loose fitting clothes that promote sweat evaporation. A hat is also recommended to keep the sun out of your face and off the top of your head.
- Avoid exercising during the hottest times of the day (12:00pm – 6:00pm).
- Wear sunscreen to protect from sunburn and to help reduce your risk of skin cancer.
- Check your medications and consult your physician about sun exposure. Some medications recommend you avoid sun exposure. Certain conditions can be worsened by too much sun or heat exposure.
- Drink plenty of fluids!!! Both water and sports drinks are recommended when exercising in the heat. Sports drinks will help to replace sodium and potassium lost while you sweat; however, water should be your primary drink.

Being outside when the weather is nice is fun and relaxing. Sun exposure give us vitamin D and can have a positive effect on mood. Being safe and following the above guidelines can keep our relaxing time spent outside from becoming a medical emergency.

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) classes may be available in an area near you!

Highland Hall

1002 E. Warner
Guthrie, OK 73044
Tuesday / Thursday
11:00am – 12:00pm

Woodson Senior Center

3401 S. May Ave. (in Woodson Park)
OKC, OK 73119
Monday / Wednesday / Friday
2:00pm – 3:00pm

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Areawide Ombudsman Advocate for Seniors at Capitol

On April 11th, advocates for senior issues visited the Capitol to voice concerns with legislators about vital programs for the aging community. As we arrived, we were given green hats that said “Stand Up for Seniors.” As more people funneled into the Capitol, we were informed of current bills that were going to have effects on the aging populace. We talked, we listened, and we learned more about some of the issues facing our older neighbors. We learned about some of the effects of the budgets cuts, and possible outcomes with nutrition programs, adult day centers, and Advantage Waiver programs. These programs help families who continue to work but are in need of help during the day for a loved one while they work. This day was to speak to our legislators, give them our information, let them know how the public feels and help them understand how important these issues truly are. All of the Ombudsman from Areawide Aging Agency attended along with the Ombudsman staff from the State office from Aging Services Division of DHS.

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Piedmont Church of the Nazarene

2011 Piedmont Road N.
Piedmont, OK 73078

Monday / Wednesday / Friday
2:00pm – 3:00pm

McFarlin United Methodist Church

419 S. University Blvd.
Norman, OK 73069

Tuesday / Thursday
1:00pm – 2:00pm



Pictured left to right, back row, Pat Bean, Deputy State Ombudsman, Tony Fullbright, State Program Field Rep., Eric Locke, Areawide Ombudsman. Front row, Patricia Shidler, and Erin Davis, both Areawide Ombudsman.

Silver Haired Legislators Spend Session Monitoring Bills

Oklahoma's 56th First Regular Legislative Session adjourned May 26, 2017. Oklahoma senior advocacy groups worked tireless hours monitoring the 2017 bills. Many thanks to our diligent advocates who kept a watchful eye on 53 targeted bills. Three examples are:

HB 1116 Authorizes the admissibility of statements made by vulnerable or incapacitated adults in criminal proceedings if they describe any act of abuse, neglect, violence or financial exploitation that otherwise would not be admissible. Died in House conference on 5/26/17.

HB 1357 Creates the Oklahoma Caregiver Support Act which would require the Department of Human Services to make rules to increase the number of locations in which services to caregivers are provided and publicize information to caregivers regarding available services. Signed by governor on 4/25/17.

HB 1620 Directs State Board of Health to develop rules that require all medical and direct care staff of certain medical facilities to complete at least one hour of dementia and Alzheimer's training. Signed by Governor on 5/15/17.

SB 730 Removes current statute eliminating smoking in designated outdoor areas from veterans centers. Signed by Governor on 4/25/17.

The Oklahoma Silver-Haired Legislature Alumni Association and OSHL will convene on September 19-20, 2017 at the Holiday Inn North in Oklahoma City for their annual state conference. Five top bills supporting the rights of senior Oklahomans will be selected to present to Oklahoma's 56th Second Regular Legislative Session in early 2018.

Just Good Fun?--- Don't Bet on it

By Rick Goralewicz, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma

In my experience, it's virtually impossible to go to a casino and not come to the conclusion that seniors love to gamble. Not so evident is the number of seniors for whom gambling addiction has become a serious problem. The Wellspring Center for Prevention and the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey (CCGNJ) sponsored a conference on gambling addiction. The data from that conference tends to bear out what some of the more recent questions that have come to me via client calls and community education programs have indicated. Gambling generates a number of problems for seniors, not all of them strictly legal.

Lia Nower, JD, Ph.D., of the Rutgers University School of Social Work, Center for Gambling Studies, provided statistics that demonstrated the increasing rate of gambling activities among older adults. The statistics revealed that in 1975, 35 percent of adults age 65 and older gambled in their lifetime. In 2001, 81 percent of adults age 51-60 gambled in the past year, and 69 percent of adults age 61 and older gambled. As with statistics on elder abuse and exploitation, the numbers on problem gambling in the senior community may show us merely the tip of the iceberg. Once, people had to go to a casino to gamble. This involved travel, itineraries, and disclosures of destination. Now, however, changing laws have led to an explosion of States permitting commercial gambling operations in one form or another. This has led to increased access. In addition, the internet has made casino-style gambling available to anyone with access to a computer. One can view advertisements for casino-style games on television 24/7. Churches, senior centers, and other senior venues generate membership and publicity by holding "Vegas Nights" or "casino nights."

Seniors gamble for a variety of reasons -- for fun, to make money, out of curiosity, or to escape from loneliness, depression, financial difficulties, declining health and emotional loss. The most common gambling activities among older adults include the purchase of lottery and scratch tickets, and playing video lottery terminals, slot machines and bingo. Seniors are often more vulnerable to gambling addiction because of a number of life factors. For example, they may seek to mask the pain associated with losing a spouse, they may be lonely or depressed or they may be facing finan-

"...gambling may start out innocently as a social engagement..."

cial or health problems. These factors can predispose a senior to the mesmerizing and stimulating effect of gambling.

Most people can enjoy gambling without serious consequences. For the vulnerable, the lure of quick money can have devastating financial effects. This hits seniors especially hard, because they have little or no opportunity to recuperate from their losses. According to one study, gambling plays a huge contributive role in the 15% bankruptcy rate among seniors. Similar to substance addictions, gambling may start out innocently as a social engagement, but for some people can progress into a solitary activity, then into a habit, a secret, a loss of control and finally, an addiction "crisis."

Among older gamblers filing bankruptcy, most view their problem as a financial issue rather than one of addiction. Therefore, they do not seek the help they need. Compulsive or pathological gambling extends beyond losing money -- the disorder interferes with normal life activities and responsibilities, threatens physical

health, sabotages reputations, and leads to psychological distress, and often suicide. Though the reported percentage of seniors with gambling and substance abuse issues is low, many hide their problem due to shame of straying so far from their deep-seated cultural values of hard work, frugality and moderation. The perception that they have “strayed” also plays a role in loved ones’ responses. They confront the elder judgmentally, and seek polarizing solutions such as involuntary guardianships. Successful or not, moving directly to litigation can destroy ordinary relationships, lead to additional difficulties with monitoring, and come nowhere close to dealing with the underlying problem. In fact, to the extent they can do so, seniors respond to the stress of family discord by burrowing even more deeply into the zone of relief which gambling provides.

The spectrum of legal ramifications for the problem continues to broaden. In addition to bankruptcy and family law issues, many try to borrow their way out of debt in order to pay off gambling losses or obtain a stake so that they can return to the casino to recoup their losses. With increasing frequency, legal reports tell of seniors who have turned to crime as a consequence of their gambling habit. These include such things as steering others to gambling establishments, moving contraband (most commonly marijuana) across State lines, and participation in scams. The fact that opportunities for gambling seem everywhere (even churches and municipal senior centers take seniors on trips to casinos; even the States operate lotteries) may make it seem all forms

of gambling are legal in all States. They are not. This may lead to unsuspecting seniors getting caught in the net when an illegal venue is raided. Additionally, as Dr. Nowin points out, Medicaid’s five year look back rule does not distinguish between estates dissipated by gifts to relatives and dissipation through gambling. Residents of States governing their Medicaid eligibility rules more strictly may find themselves shut out of Medicaid eligibility as a result of their gaming habits.

To help determine whether you or a loved one has a gambling problem, Gamblers Anonymous offers a 20 question online test at gamblersanonymous.org to help determine if a problem exists. Otherwise, here are some questions you can ask to help evaluate their situation.

- Are they preoccupied with gambling, constantly talking about it, or planning to gamble versus doing normal activities?
- Are they gambling more and more money to get the same level of excitement?
- Are they using their retirement funds or other savings to gamble, or are they pawning or selling personal items to get money to gamble with?
- Have they lost control to the point that they can’t set a limit of time and money to spend in the casino, and stick to it?
- Do they become uncomfortable, angry or lie when you ask them about their gambling activities?

A “yes” answer to any of these questions may indicate a problem.

It’s important to recognize the real problem. Thomas Broffman, an assistant professor of sociology

at Eastern Connecticut State University, says some seniors seek to get rich quick. But usually a bigger issue lurks beneath the surface. Problem gambling often starts soon after a life transition, like the death of a spouse or retirement, Broffman says.

Experts say women are more susceptible to gambling problems



than men because they use games of chance as a means of escape from bigger personal problems. For many seniors, the enemy is isolation. Whatever the cause, it’s important to catch the problem early because without anyone paying attention, life savings can go quickly, especially if a person’s memory or judgment is impaired.

A good place to find help is the **National Council on Problem Gambling**, with chapters in 35 states (www.ncpgambling.org or the hotline 1-800-522-4700). Problem gambling can lead to specific legal problems. But its cure requires a holistic approach.



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*

*Older American's Act
programs accept and
appreciate donations
but donations are not
required to receive ser-
vices. For individual sug-
gested donations, contact
the program directly.*

Volunteer opportunities are everywhere we look today. **Aging Services Inc. of Cleveland County (ASI)** is a non-profit that has five congregate meal sites across Cleveland County and a kitchen in Norman. Each site has staff but relies on volunteers to carry home delivered meals to homebound senior adults. At the sites, volunteers and staff package the nutritious meals into individual trays for home delivery to seniors who are not able to leave their home. When available, volunteers will greet you as you walk in the door of the congregate site. After lunch has been served, volunteers and staff clean and prepare the site for the next day. Any and every bit of extra help is appreciated so if you are considering whether you want to volunteer, give **ASI** a try. You'll be exposed to some of the nicest and most positive people in our community. You may find that you like it. When asked why they volunteer, there is usually a smile that precedes their answer. Some will state that they wanted to help out or to give back. Others say that all that was needed was to be asked. Some enjoy the companionship and camaraderie and others just need something to do to stay active. Whatever the reason, please volunteer. You can contact **Aging Services Inc.** at the main office at **321-3200** or call any of **ASI's** five congregate meal sites in Cleveland County. Our volunteers make a difference every day!

Summer is here and with it always comes the beginning of a new grant year. The grant process is over and **Aging Services of Canadian County (ASCC)** is ready to begin a new chapter in serving the seniors of Canadian County.

ASCC is dealing with hard times budget wise and is looking at every way possible to make cuts with the least possible interruption of services for the seniors that **ASCC** serves. It is a difficult time, but **ASCC** strives daily to provide the very best services possible to se-

niors. Donations are even more important at this time, so here is a list of **ASI's** suggested donations: \$2.00 per meal, housekeeping \$5.00 per cleaning, local transportation \$2.50, and round trip transportation to and from Oklahoma City \$7.50. Donations are not required, but do greatly help the program.

As always, seniors needing services in Canadian County can call **405-262-7121** for more information.

The hot and humid weather of Oklahoma is here to stay! **Logan County Aging Services(LCAS)** has a few tips to make life a bit more bearable during these months. Do any and all chores in the earliest part of the day before the heat sets in. Drink plenty of non-caffeinated cool drinks. Lemonade and water are good choices. Add some fruits and herbs to your drinks to spruce up the taste.

Join **LCAS** for lunch at any of the nutrition sites throughout Logan County. The meal and activities are enjoyable and all of the buildings are air conditioned! Remember to make your reservations a day in advance. For more information, call **405 282-1803**. See you at the sites!

It has been a very busy spring at **Mobile Meals**. Requests for services have increased over the past few months. Mobile Meals staff is working to increase the number of churches providing meals in order to be able to serve more seniors.

The **Mobile Meals** office has just moved to 1316 NE 12th #100, Oklahoma City, OK, 73117. **Mobile Meals** will be located in the McGuire Senior Center at NE 12th and Lottie. The new phone number is **(405) 600-6735**. The old number should roll over for 6 months.

The **Caregiver Fundamental Program (CFP)** at Sunbeam Family Services

provides services to family caregivers as well as grandparents raising grandchildren.

A Legal Resource Seminar will be held on Thursday, July 13 from 2:00 – 3:30 at Sunbeam Family Services, 1100 NW 14th St, OKC. Call or email Jessica Welp for more details or to RSVP: 405 609.8939; jwelp@sunbeamfamilyservices.org.

CFP also has several support groups for family caregivers and grandparents raising their grandchildren throughout our four county coverage area.

Caregiver Support Group at Spanish Cove, Yukon meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Fiesta Room at Spanish Cove, 11, Palm Ave, Yukon.

Caregiver Support Group in Mustang (partnered with the Parkinson Foundation) meets on the second Wednesday of every month from 2:30 to 3:30 pm at the Mustang Senior Center, 1201 N. Mustang Rd.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group in El Reno meets on the second Monday of every month from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at Youth and Family Services, Inc., 7565 E Hwy 66.

Caregiver Support Group at Excell Hospice meets on the second Tuesday of every month from 12:00 to 1:30 pm at 1200 SW 104th St (use east entrance). **Caregiver Support Group at Rivermont, Norman** meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 12:30 to 2:00 pm at the Gardens at Rivermont, 750 Canadian Trails Dr.

Grandparents Raising

Grandchildren Support Group in Norman meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at Generations Church, 1433 W Boyd, Norman. RSVP to Jacquie Jackson at 405-919-4061.

Caregiver Support Group in Guthrie meets on the third Thursday of every month from 12:00 to 1:30 pm at Companion Healthcare, 1310 E Oklahoma, Guthrie. RSVP to Verla Raines at 405-519-0800 or verlaraines@gmail.com

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group in Guthrie meets on the last Tuesday of every month from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at Noble Avenue Baptist Church, 1210 W Noble, Guthrie.

Caregiver Support Group at Easter Seals meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month from 12:00 to 1:30 pm at Easter Seals Adult Day Center, 701 NE 13th St, OKC.

Caregiver Support Group at Sunbeam meets on the last Tuesday of every month from 12:00 to 1:30 pm at Sunbeam Family Services, 1100 NW 14th St (SW corner of 14th St and Classen Blvd).

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren at Heronville Elementary meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 3:30 to 5:00 pm at the school, 1240 SW 29th St, OKC.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren at Windsor Hills Elementary meets on the second Wednesday of every month from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at the school, 2909 N Ann Arbor Ave, OKC.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren at Educare meets the second Thursday of every month from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm at the school, 500 SE Grand Blvd, OKC. A light meal is served.. (No childcare is provided for this group.)

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in Midwest City meets

the third Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at Fountainbrook Assisted Living Center, 11510 SE 15th St, MWC

A snack or light lunch and childcare is provided at the grandparent's support groups unless otherwise noted. Lunch or light snack is provided at caregiver's support groups depending on the time of day. Reservations are required for the support groups. For caregiver groups, call Please contact Jessica Welp for more information at 405-609-8939 or jwelp@sunbeamfamilyservices.org. For grandparents groups, call Andrea Sneed at 405 609-6551 unless otherwise noted.



EMARK is pleased to partner with the Areawide Aging Agency to provide transportation to seniors 60 or over. **EMARK** also offers PLUS paratransit, reduced bus fare and discount taxi coupons for eligible seniors.

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 Donations are greatly appreciated, but not required.

**Areawide Board
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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.



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.