



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



Congresswoman Kendra Horn (fifth from left) poses with seniors from the St. Asbury Nutrition Site in South Oklahoma City during a recent visit.

Congresswoman Kendra Horn Visits Oklahoma County Senior Meal Site

On May 31st, Congresswoman Kendra Horn visited with the seniors at St. Luke's Asbury's Nutrition Site in south Oklahoma City. She answered their many questions and listened to their concerns. The seniors were very happy to have Ms. Horn visit and invited her to join them in their bingo game. She also visited with Blair Schoeb, Areawide's CEO, a few of our Board members and Ronnie Winters, Oklahoma County Senior Nutrition Program Director. If you are in the 5th District (Oklahoma and Pottawatomie Counties), visit her website to find out more about the Congresswoman and to contact her about federal issues. <https://horn.house.gov/>. When she is in town, Congresswoman Horn plans on visiting with more seniors at meal sites and senior centers.

Areawide Business News

Areawide Begins New Year with New Grantees

July 1 2019 begins a new fiscal year for Areawide and its funded programs. For FY2020, there are several major changes. Redland's Community College who has been a partner for 39 years and has provided the seniors of Canadian County a broad range of services will no longer be providing meals in Canadian County. Oklahoma County Senior Nutrition Program will provide congregate meals at the Mustang Nutrition site and home delivered meals throughout the county.

Another major change for next year is the grantee for Coordination of Services. For over 40 years, Mobile Meals has coordinated home delivered meals in Oklahoma County through the volunteer services of local churches and other organizations to prepare and deliver the meals. For FY2020, St. Luke's Methodist Church will coordinate the churches in order to continue this important service.

For both new providers, participants currently receiving services will continue to receive the services.

Other providers for FY2020 are: Aging Services Inc. of Cleveland County, Logan County Aging Services, Oklahoma County Senior Nutrition Program, Sunbeam Family Services, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, EMBARK, and University of Central Oklahoma. Available services include: congregate and home delivered meals, nutrition counseling, nutrition education, outreach, homemaker, transportation, respite, caregiver training, support groups, school supplies for grandparents raising grandchildren, health promotion, legal services and legal education.

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

OG&E Donates Fans for Seniors

Areawide Aging Agency would like to thank OG&E for their generous donation of 100 fans in June. We distributed them to seniors to help them keep cool this summer. With the help of our funded projects, all fans were given out to seniors without proper air-conditioning. Oklahoma summers can be brutal to frail seniors who have no way of keeping their home cool. OG&E has been donating fans to Areawide for over 10 years. We thank them for their partnership and for their concern for seniors.

Areawide Aging Agency would like to thank the Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma for their generous donation of 80 cases of cookies in April. They were distributed to seniors associated with our Older Americans Act projects in Canadian, Cleveland, Logan and Oklahoma Counties.



Stacie Dasovich from Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma loaded her vehicle with boxes of Girl Scout cookies for seniors.

Successful Session for Silver-Haired Legislatures

The Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature (OSHL) worked hard to advocate for older Oklahomans. Two main bills they were supporting passed and were signed by Governor Stitt. Senate Bill 888 “Options Counseling” by Senator Kim David and Representative Carol Bush, would inform older persons about Long-Term Care facility options before being placed directly into a nursing home. Also, Senate Bill 280 “Nursing Home Reform” by Senator Frank Simpson and Representative Marcus McEntire, that increases Direct Care staffing and more. According to the Tulsa World, Simpson stated, “Nationally, we rank toward the bottom in the quality of care for seniors in our nursing homes. The objective of the bill is to improve quality of care in our centers and doing that through an incentive program that incentivizes nursing homes to provide quality care.” Governor Stitt signed these two bills late May, as OSHL sighed in relief. OSHL also celebrated the signing of House Bill 2671 which allows Oklahomans receiving an Income Tax Refund to donate to SHL. If you are 60 or over and would like to be involved with the Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature please call 405-942-8500 and ask for Sarah. OSHL will be holding their annual meeting September 17th at the Oklahoma Capital.

Hydration Is Important for Seniors During the Summer Heat

Summertime is here, and we know how hot Oklahoma summers can get. It is very important to make sure our bodies have enough water to prevent dehydration; but, how much is enough? It is recommended that you drink 1 cup of water for every 20lbs of body weight or around 48-64 ounces of water per day. A good rule of thumb is to drink when you are thirsty.

Water is important for all cells in the human body and helps regulate the body’s temperature through sweat and respiration. Another major function of water is to act as a cushion for the brain, spinal cord, and joints.

Did you know:

- 60% of the body is made up of water
- 73% of the heart and brain tissues are made up of water
- 83% of the lung tissue is made up of water
- 64% of the skin is made up of water

Dehydration is a frequent cause of hospitalization among older individuals. The following symptoms may indicate you are dehydrated:

- Confusion
- Fatigue and drowsiness
- Labored speech
- Dry mouth
- Sunken eyes
- Dark urine

If you experience any of these symptoms it is important to seek medical attention right away.

The Center for Active Living and Learning offers fitness classes for adults 60 and over in central Oklahoma. All classes are donation based and no service is denied due to lack of donation. The Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) classes offer an evidence-based physical

activity class designed to improve balance, strength, and flexibility. Classes are led by trained exercise professionals. Come see us in one of our classes near you!

Our locations:

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: 1:30pm – 2:30pm

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 us: E-mail call@uco.edu

Call (405) 974-5309

www.ucocall.com

No One Is Only Lonely--Nor Should They

I'm willing to bet most readers know J.D. Souther's 1979 hit from which I stole my title. It's a great song, whether by the original artist or the covers by Linda Ronstadt or Roy Orbison. While I've taken the title, I also take issue with it. No one is *only* lonely. In fact, we are only now coming to realize the ramifications of loneliness and, in particular, its effect upon elders.

Way back when, as I transitioned from a private, general practice of law to elder law with Legal Aid, I encountered a woman in her mid-80's. After an ice storm, she received a knock on the door. She opened to a man identifying himself as a roofer, and offering to repair her roof, which, he pointed out, looked like it had taken a few hits from hail and ice. She invited him into her house. Over coffee, he explained that he had surplus materials from other jobs around town, and could do the work for her at a discount, but he needed payment of \$500.00 in cash up front. The lady didn't have that much cash on hand, but the "roofer" kindly offered to drive her to the bank and back home. He did so, and left with \$500.00 in his pocket, never to return.

The scenario could have turned out much worse. I asked her why she exposed herself to danger by letting this stranger in her house. She said that after a few months of no company, she was just glad to have someone stop by.

Sad to say, this is not an isolated case. For some people, their only form of social contact comes from communication with commercial organizations or scammers. These include telemarketing phone calls or letters from "clairvoyants", sweepstakes, online gambling, and work from home scams. Particularly heart-rending are romance scams, victimizing vulnerable persons via the basic human desire to love and be loved in return. Victims

and perpetrators of financial scams often develop relationships. Gaining trust by doing odd jobs, lending a sympathetic ear, or seeking and dispensing personal advice are staples of the scammer's toolbox. Thus the victim suffers both deprivation by a thief and betrayal by a supposed friend. Most victims report the latter as the most devastating loss.

One study, by the University of California at San Francisco, found that participants 60 years old and older who reported feeling lonely saw a 45 percent

"For some people, their only form of social contact comes from communication with commercial organizations or scammers"

increase in their risk of death. Isolated survey respondents also had a 59 percent greater risk of mental and physical decline than their more social counterparts.

Kaiser Health News reported in March that studies reveal between 33 and 43 percent of older Americans are lonely. However, they caution, those figures combine two groups: people who are sometimes lonely and those who are always lonely. The distinction matters. People who are sometimes lonely don't necessarily stay that way; they can move in and out of this state. And the potential health impact of loneliness — a higher risk of heart disease, dementia, immune dysfunction, functional impairment and early death — depends on its severity. In contrast, severe loneliness places sufferers at "high risk," while those moderately lonely remain at low, or, at least, lower risk. According to Dr. Vyjeyanthi Periyakoil, of Stanford University School of Medicine, "if you compare loneliness to a toxin and ask 'How much exposure is dangerous, at what dose and over what period of time?' the truth is we don't really know yet."

How do we deal with this? That's the

\$64,000.00 question. The jury's still out and we still have much to learn. We know that the answer does not lie in merely telling seniors to "get a hobby" or "join the senior center." The range of companionship needs varies as greatly as the population of seniors itself.

While the search for an answer goes on, we do have some techniques to address the problem. Bobbie Smith, a professional caregiver with more than 50 years' experience, suggests the following:

Listen and observe. "We often don't listen enough to the people we love," laments Tina Tessina, PhD, psychotherapist and author of "The Ten Smartest Decisions a Woman Can Make After Forty." According to Tessina, "Saying 'tell me more' is a gift you can give from your heart." Encouraging them to express themselves can help you discover what



interests and passions lay dormant, just waiting to be rekindled.

Develop a strategy to defeat seclusion. Know what your loved one enjoys doing, and use that to develop a personalized loneliness eradication plan. For example, Ms. Smith cared for an angry 91-year-old man reluctant to communicate. She discovered that he had a passion for singing and photography. One day while walking down the hall with him, she began to belt out "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." The man responded by singing right along with her. Today, he sings for his community and is part

By Rick Goralewicz, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma

of a club of retired photographers.

Let them teach you. Smith encourages caregivers to connect with their loved ones by letting them pass some hard-earned knowledge on to you. "I learn something new every day because I am being taught by the best," Smith admits. The key is to let the senior's passions and experiences guide the lesson plan.

Bridge the generation gap. Caregivers can play a vital role in fostering relationships between a senior and their youngest relatives. Grandkids often see their grandparents as either crazy or boring, when they should consider their elders sources of valuable wisdom and fun. Try to come up with ways to help the oldest and the youngest generations of your family spend time together, whether in person, by phone or via mail. Seniors can contribute a lot to their families if they are allowed to remain engaged.

It's the thought that counts. Urge other family members to reach out to an elderly loved one. It doesn't have to be a grand, time-consuming gesture. Something as simple as sending a card, sharing a favorite meal, or calling for 30 minutes a couple times a week can go a long way.

I began this piece with a title from J.D. Souther. It's fitting to end with a chorus from John Prine:

"Old trees just grow stronger/
old rivers grow wider every day
But old people, they just grow lone-
some/waiting for someone to say
Hello in there/ Hello"

Vaccinations Seniors May Need

Many older adults are not getting vaccinations that they need. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 30% of people 65 and older skipped their flu shot last year, and 2/3 of them did not receive the shingles vaccine. As people age, their immune system weakens, and they are more at risk for getting diseases like the flu and shingles and also developing life-threatening consequences from them.

According to the CDC, there are four vaccinations that every older adult needs.

Flu Vaccine – This once a year vaccine is a must for older adults. Up to 85% of seasonal flu-related deaths are for people 65 & over. The vaccine typically cuts the risk by 40 to 60%. To improve your chances of escaping the flu, there is a stronger vaccine designed for people 65 and over. Even if you get the flu, the severity of your illness may be lessened if you received the flu shot. Early fall is the ideal time to be vaccinated. Flu season usually starts in late October, and it takes about two weeks to build up immunity.

Pneumococcal Vaccine – Older adults are much more likely to develop complications from pneumococcal bacteria, such as pneumonia, blood infections and meningitis. Pneumococcal disease kills about 18,000 adults 65 and over each year in the U.S. There are two vaccines, PCV13 and PPSV23. The CDC recommends that all adults 65 & over have both shots, a year apart. Persons under age 65 who have chronic health problems should also get the vaccine.

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Areawide Program News

*Aging Services,
Inc. (Cleveland
County)*

*Logan County
Aging Services*

*Oklahoma
County Senior
Nutrition Program*

Embark

*Legal Aid
Services of
Oklahoma*

*St. Luke's
Methodist Church*

*Sunbeam Family
Services Caregiver
Fundamentals*

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

*All Older American's Act Pro-
grams accept donations which
are not required in order to
receive services. Contact the
individual program for more
informations.*

Oklahoma County Senior Nutrition Program (OCSNP) would like to thank the Boy Scouts of America Troop #177 for the great job of getting the Mud Pot, OCSNP's senior garden, ready for spring planting. OG&E did a wonderful job in planting the Mud Pot.

OCSNP will be closed the 4th of July and September 2 for Labor Day. The annual Picnic theme for 2019 is "casino Fun". IT will be held at Joe E. Barnes Park on September 6, 2019. Be sure to make your reservation with your site manager.

St. Luke's Methodist Church is glad to become a part of the Older American's Act providers through Areawide Aging Agency. July 1, **Ending Hunger OKC**, through **St. Luke's Methodist Church** will begin coordinating home delivered meals with the churches and organizations who have been part of the Mobile Meals program for many years. The meal providers and those needing meals can call **405 609-1035** for more information.

Logan County Aging Services (LCAS) welcomes the new fiscal year looking forward to summer and all of its activities. If you're looking for someplace cool to go during the day, consider one of the three nutrition sites. Have a good meal while enjoying the activities and the cool air. For more information, call **282-1803**.

Sunbeam Family Services offers the Caregiver Fundamentals Program (CFP), a comprehensive caregiver program that offers several different services for caregivers and grandparents raising their grandchildren throughout Canadian, Cleveland, Logan, and Oklahoma counties.

Recently, **CFP** provided nearly 400 backpacks filled with school supplies for grandchildren while providing additional resources to their grandparents as part of the School Supply program this July. In addition, we offer support groups in Guthrie, Moore, Norman, El Reno, and Oklahoma City that provide a safe and confidential place to talk, listen, and gather resources. A light meal and childcare are provided. **CFP's** caregiver program will be offering several different educational opportunities including the following upcoming seminars: "What is Hospice" at Sunbeam on Thursday, October 18, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm and "Opioid Abuse in Senior Adults" on Thursday, November 8, 2:00 – 3:30 pm..

CFP also offers support groups for caregivers in Guthrie, Mustang, Norman, Oklahoma City, and Yukon that provide a safe and confidential place to talk, listen, and gather resources. A light meal is provided. If you are a full-time family caregiver and you need a break from your caregiving responsibilities, you may be eligible to benefit from **CFP's** respite service. We hire, screen, train, and place caring individuals with your loved one to provide you with a much-needed break from caregiving. To learn more about any of these services or make a reservation for a training program, please call Talena Ford at **405.609.6551**.

Summer is here. **Aging Services of Cleveland County (ASI)** enjoyed many wonderful activities at the congregate meal sites this past spring. The celebration of Easter with Easter egg hunts and bunny visits, as well as Mother's Day and Father's Day gifts were just some of the activities enjoyed by seniors. Other activities have been birthday parties, karaoke, new exercise classes. There are so many opportunities for social activities and making friends. Please join ASI for their summer activities at one of the five congregate meal sites.

ASI also finished the satisfaction surveys for each of the services provided by ASI and is happy to say that many wonderful comments were received on how everyone is enjoying all of ASI's programs – housekeeping, respite care, transportation, home delivered meals, congregate meals, and outreach services. Thank you to all who completed a survey. ASI always appreciate the comments and the feedback on how staff can improve services.

ASI will honor all the wonderful volunteers this month. The programs wouldn't be the same without the wonderful men and women who help us each week. ASI is so grateful and are always looking for new people to join the program.

A reminder to be sure and drink lots of water and keep cool using fans or air conditioners during these hot summer months. Also a cool bath or shower can provide some relief as well as dressing in light weight, light colored, loose fitting clothes as well as a hat.

Enjoy these summer months. Eat a wonderful garden vegetable, go swimming, attend a county fair, or just sit on your porch and enjoy nature.

If you need help of any kind,

please do not hesitate to contact **Aging Services of Cleveland County**. Call **405-321-3200**, email at tammyvaughn5@gmail.com, or visit ASI's website at www.agingservicesok.com.



EMBARC 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

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

Donations are greatly appreciated, but not required.

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Tdap(tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) Vaccine and/or the Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster- If you don't remember ever getting a Tdap shot, you probably need it. It can count as one of the Td boosters you're supposed to get every 10 years. You get the Tdap only once. Due to the rise in whooping cough cases in the U.S., you really do need to be vaccinated against it, even if



you're over 65. This vaccine is crucial for people who have close contact with infants under 12 months of age, such as grandparents, etc.

Shingles – The CDC recommends everyone 50 & older get the new shingles vaccine, Shingrex, even if they had the earlier recommended vaccine, Zostavax – which was less effective – and even if they have already had shingles. Shingrex is given in two doses spaced 2 to 6 months apart. The two doses will provide more than 90% protection against shingles, a very painful disease. One in three people will get shingles, usually after age 50. The risk rises with age.

By age 85, half of adults have had at least one outbreak. At least 20% experience mild to severe nerve pain (postherpetic neuralgia) that can linger for months or even years.



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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.

United Way
Partner Agency



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.