A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The staff of the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging hope our clients, providers, supporters, and constituents had Blessed and Happy Holiday Season. We are so thankful to have made it through one more year. As always the challenges have been many, but our perseverance has been unshakeable as we seek to advocate, administer, and provide services to the greatest population in the world..."Older Adults". There are a lot of changes being proposed at the state level, which will impact how services are currently rendered in the state of Kansas. But rest assured, the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging has been in the forefront of providing services to seniors at the local level for over thirty years, and we plan to hold steadfast to this commitment for many more.

MENSAJE DE LA DIRECTORA

El personal de la Agencia de Área de Wyandotte/Leavenworth en el Envejecimiento quiere desearte a todos nuestros clientes, los proveedores, los partidarios, y los constituyentes una bendita y feliz temporada Navideña. Estamos tan agraciados por haber tenido un año más. Como siempre los desafíos han sido muchos, pero nuestra perseverancia ha estado firme como procuramos recomendar, administrar, y proveer servicios a la población más admirable en el mundo..." Las Personas Mayores de Edad". Hay muchos cambios que están propuestos al nivel estatal, que van afectar los servicios que se ofrecen ahora mismo en el estado de Kansas. Pero esten seguros que la Agencia de Área de Wyandotte/Leavenworth en el Envejecimiento ha estado en primera fila suministrando servicios a los envejecientes al nivel local por más de treinta años, y nosotros planeamos permanecer firmes a este compromiso por muchos años más.

The birth of a new year always brings with it the joys and hopes of things yet unseen. But one thing that remains the same and that you can always depend on us. “Say it with me”, 60Plus?...Call On Us!

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- Meals on Wheels Program
- 2012 Medicare Part B Premiums Lower than Projected
- Low Income Energy Assistance
- Silver Haired Legislators
- Utility Tax Rebates
- Cost of Living Adjustment
- Senior Tax Assistance
SENIOR FIT PROGRAM

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging (AAA) sponsored 49 seniors with scholarships to the Kansas City Community College Wellness Center.

Seniors receive scholarships that give them the ability to work-out at the wellness center. Weight machines, walking, Zumba, group exercise, etc are part of the benefits of the program.

Although, most seniors living in western Wyandotte County prefer this opportunity, the AAA’s main focus is to increase participation at the Personal Training sites in Wyandotte County.

The Personal Training sites offer group exercise twice a week along with Health Screenings and Nutrition Education.

AVAILABLE TAX ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS

Homeowners receiving a Homestead Property Tax or Safe Senior Property Tax Refund and checking the ‘Advancement Box’ on their K 40H or K-40PT Forms are eligible for advancement toward their County Real Estate Taxes. The tax payer must file the Homestead or Safe Senior Refund Claim annually and cannot have any outstanding balances with the Kansas Department of Revenue.

The advancement information will be sent electronically to the County Treasurer’s office and may appear on your annual property tax statement towards the 1st half of the amount due on the tax statement. Whether receiving assistance from a paid tax preparer or where free volunteer tax assistance programs exists, Homestead and Food Sales Tax Refund assistance should be requested.

The Clerks’ Office at 701 N. 7th Street, KCK can assist in the preparation of forms for senior citizens not filing regular tax forms and who meet Homestead Property Tax, Safe Senior Property Tax, and Food Sales Tax Refund guidelines. Assistance for these refunds will be offered from January 3, 2012 through April 17, 2012. Statement(s) of proof of household income are required.

Tax Check-Off Supports Meals on Wheels

Again this year, Kansans filing their state income tax returns have an opportunity to help ensure their elderly neighbors continue to receive warm, nutritious meals through the Meals on Wheels programs.

Monies donated to the Kansas Meals on Wheels Fund through the income tax check-off are distributed by the Kansas Department on Aging to the local senior nutrition programs according to a formula based on the number of meals served by each program.

Those funds help fill a gap that could have otherwise crippled many meal services across the State’s budget constraints.

The Senior Citizen Meals on Wheels Contribution Program was created in 2002 by the Kansas Legislature to allow taxpayers to make voluntary donations to support home delivered meals.

Individuals receiving a state income tax refund can indicate in the designated space on the tax form an amount of their refund they would like to contribute to the Meals on Wheels program. Contributions can range from $1 to all their refund.

The contributed money supplements client donations and local, state and private funds that are leveraged by the federal Older Americans Act funds to support Meals on Wheels, as well as voluntary support for these programs.

The federally funded Nutrition Program for the Elderly, which provides meals to older adults in senior centers, nutrition sites and in their own homes, began more than 30 years ago.

Questions regarding the tax check off or the Wyandotte County Meals on Wheels Program may be directed to 913-573-8546.

PERSONAL TRAINING SITES:

CROSSLINES RETIREMENT CENTER
NEW LOCATION!!!!
3030 Powell
Kansas City, KS 66106
Tuesday & Thursday
9:30am

STRANGER’S REST BAPTIST CHURCH
2052 North 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
Monday & Wednesday
10:30am

VERNON MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER
3436 North 27th Street
Kansas City, KS 66104
Tuesday & Thursday
10:00am

60plus?...Call On Us!

For more information regarding the SeniorFit Program, you may call the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.
2012 MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS LOWER THAN PROJECTED

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently announced that Medicare Part B premiums in 2012 will be lower than previously projected and the Part B deductible will decrease by $22. Medicare Trustees predicted monthly premiums would be $106.60; instead, premiums will be $99.90. The 2012 premium is a $15.50 decrease over the standard 2011 premium of $115.40 paid by new enrollees and higher income Medicare beneficiaries and by Medicaid on behalf of low-income enrollees.

Medicare Part B covers physicians’ services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services durable medical equipment, and other items.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, people with Medicare also receive free preventive services and a 50 percent discount on covered prescription drugs when they enter the prescription drug “donut hole.” This year, 1.8 million people with Medicare have received cheaper prescription drugs, while nearly 20.5 million Medicare beneficiaries have received a free Annual Wellness visit or other free preventive services like cancer screenings.

For more information on how seniors are getting more value out of Medicare, please visit: www.healthcare.gov.

Information provided by the Kansas Insurance Commission

“Take the Night Off”
A Caregiver Appreciation Project

In honor of National Caregiver Recognition Month (November), the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging sponsored 46 caregivers with the “Take the Night Off” project. The goal was to provide a night of needed respite from the task of dinner preparation.

Each caregiver received a $25 gift card for either Hen House or Price Chopper to purchase dinner at their leisure. To qualify, the caregivers must have met eligibility requirements under the Older Americans Act and/or been identified as a caregiver by the Area Agency on Aging in 2011.

If you are an adult family member or another individual who is an informal provider of in-home and/or community care to an older individual who is 60 years of age or older who is the care recipient.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - LIEAP

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit.

In order to qualify, applicants must be:

- Living at the address, be personally responsible for purchasing heating costs incurred at the current residence,
- Demonstrate a recent history of payments
- The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons living at the address may not exceed guidelines listed below

Payments will be made to the fuel vendor.

LIEAP applications (paper and online) will be available January 18, 2012. LIEAP applicants from 2011 and December recipients of food, cash, and medical assistance will automatically receive a paper application in the mail at their home address.

For more information or to request an application, please call 1-800-432-0043 or Kansas City SRS at 913-279-7000 or the Leavenworth SRS at 913-651-6200.
WYANDOTTE/LEAVENWORTH SILVER HAIRLED LEGISLATORS GIVE THANKS

The Wyandotte County Silver Haired Legislators held their annual dinner for their Senators, House of Representatives and Commissioners on Tuesday, November 29, 2011. The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Silver Haired Legislators want to thank all of those who attended. It was a full house. An award winning meal provided by The Youngblood’s and the ambiance was perfect. We had great conversation addressing issues and concerns impacting our communities such as predatory lending practices, grandparents’ custody rights legislation and future changes to programs and services for the elderly and disabled.

We are in anticipation and expectation of a fantastic 2012 and look forward to being better advocates for the people while supporting our Kansas elected officials to bring civil humanitarian harmony to all the citizens of Kansas. Please let us know how we, the Silver Haired Legislators can better support you, your families and our legislators!

YOU ARE YOUR BEST ADVOCATE

In today’s world self expression and freedom of speech are flaunted to legitimize how we feel about social issues. Just remember the young lady who defied the banking industry speaking out on excessive bank fees. Others joined her in her efforts and the bank did not apply the fees. The same can happen to our seniors.

There are organizations that represent and speak out on issues and concerns for the elderly. It helps them when seniors and their families make their concerns known. The media urges us to contact our legislators to let them know what you need or want.

You are your best advocate. For next year let’s come together and work together to address those issues and concerns that affect the seniors in our communities.

Listed are various groups that are ready to communicate your concerns to those who can affect change such as the Kansas State Silver Haired Legislature @ (785) 368-7326 or silver-haired.legislature@aging.ks.gov; the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Areawide Advisory Council @ (913) 573-8531 or (913) 684-0777; your State Legislator @ 1-800-432-3924; El Centro at (913) 677-0177; AARP Kansas @ 1-866-448-3619 and the Kansas Department on Aging @ 1-800-432-3535.

Let your voices be heard!

2012 CALENDARS ARE IN!

The 2012 Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging calendars are now available!

While visiting us, don’t forget to ask for your copy!

If you are unable to stop in the office you may contact the office at

913-573-8531

A $2.50 donation is welcome to help cover printing and shipping costs.

While supplies last.
Utility Tax Rebates will be accepted from January 3, 2011 - March 31, 2011. Questions regarding the application process may be directed to the Unified Government’s Clerks office at 913-573-5260. Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging will assist with applications by appointment only on Tuesdays and Thursdays only. You may call for appointments to 913-573-8531.

COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT IS FIRST SINCE 2009

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 60 million Americans will increase 3.6 percent in 2012, the Social Security Administration announced. The 2.6 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that nearly 55 million Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2012. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2011.

Some other changes that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to $110,100 from $106,800. Of the estimated 161 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2012, about 10 million will pay higher taxes as a result of the increase in the taxable maximum.

Information about Medicare changes for 2012, when announced, will be available at www.Medicare.gov. For some beneficiaries, their Social Security increase may be partially or completely offset by increases in Medicare premiums.

Information provided by News Release by Social Security Administration dated October 19, 2011

SARAH LLANQUE, RN, PhD...Best Wishes!

Sarah Llanque, RN, PhD, provided health assessments to older adults participating in the SeniorFit program at the Argentine Community Center’s meal site and the Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) Wellness Center. Before coming to work for the agency Sarah worked with dementia patients at an Alzheimer’s Day Program and for the Alzheimer’s Association in Kansas City with caregivers and persons newly diagnosed with dementia. Sarah’s passion for working with older adults lead her to pursue graduate studies in the PhD Nursing and Certificate in Gerontology program at the UMKC School of Nursing and Center on Aging Studies. Her experience working with older helps has helped her provide patient-centered and age-appropriate health assessments (e.g., blood pressures, cholesterol screenings) to senior participants in the SeniorFit program. Sarah graduated with her PhD in Nursing and Certificate in Gerontology in December 2011. Sarah plans to work with seniors with the Indian Health Services (IHS) in New Mexico/Arizona area. She also plans on teaching and pursing post-doctoral fellowship training. Sarah will miss all the senior participants she has met and her wonderful colleagues at the Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA and KCKCC Wellness Center. She leaves with fond memories.

The AAA wishes Sarah well in her future endeavors!
Black Settlers on the Kaw Indian Reservation is an interesting book. It tells the story of more than 130 years ago when 275 black families arrived at Dunlap on the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT -Katy) railroad. At that time, Dunlap was a little village only 3 years old, located in southeast Morris County in Kansas, near the old Indian Trading Post. The Kaw Indians had been moved to Oklahoma and these black families were coming to secure land on the former Kaw Indian Reservation located in Morris, Lyon, Wabaunsee and Chase counties.

Benjamin “Pappy” Singleton was responsible for bringing hundreds to Dunlap and thousands to other locations in Kansas to secure land. The families would eventually own more than 15,000 acres of “Indian Land” and more than 140 years later several black families still hold ownership in land on the former Kaw Indian Reservations.

The book contains 130 pages with more than 20 maps, photos and illustrations. Jim Sharp authored the book and now resides in Manhattan and a native of the Kaw Reservation area. Black Settlers on the Kaw Indian Reservation describes the story of their joy, toil, suffering, sacrifices and successes that merit the remembrance of those who settled, lived and are buried here in several of the black cemeteries on the former Kaw Reservation land.

Benjamin “Pappy” Singleton
American activist and businessman best known for his role in establishing settlements in Kansas.

WOD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE THE COMMUNICATOR ELECTRONICALLY?

We’re building our mailing list now. All you have to do is submit your email address.

My email address is: ____________________________________________________________________________

Return to:
Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging
Attn: The Communicator
1300 North 78th Street, Suite 100
Kansas City, Kansas 66112

Lowell Lofts
1040 Orville, Kansas City, Kansas 66102

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Phone: 816-444-4611  Fax: 816-444-9480
Toll Free: 866-878-4611  TDD: 800-735-2966

60plus?...Call On Us!

20th Annual African American History Committee Banquet
Sponsored by Unified Government/Kansas City, Kansas

February 18, 2012
Jack Reardon Civic Center
6pm
Contact Lynette Lasley at 913-573-5472 for tickets
**FUN, FUN, FUN**

**HAPPY NEW YEARS!**

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

- ARROW
- ASH WEDNESDAY
- BLACK EYED PEAS
- BLACK HISTORY
- BLIZZARD
- CHAMPAGNE
- CHINESE NEW YEAR
- CHOCOLATE
- CUPID
- DIETING
- GROUNDHOG DAY
- HEARTS
- HOMESTEAD
- HORNS
- KISSES
- LEAP YEAR

- LINCOLN’S BIRTHDAY
- LOVE
- MARTIN LUTHER KING JR
- NEW YEARS DAY
- PRESIDENTS’ DAY
- PUXATONY PHIL
- RED
- RESOLUTIONS
- SNOWFLAKES
- STREAMERS
- SUPERBOWL
- SWEETHEARTS
- UTILITY TAX Rebates
- VALENTINE’S DAY
- WASHINGTON
- WINTER

**~ QUOTES FOR THOUGHT ~**

- A New Year’s resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other. ~ Author Unknown
- Never tell your resolution beforehand, or it’s twice as onerous a duty. ~ John Selden
- The Old Year has gone. Let the dead past bury its own dead. The New Year has taken possession of the clock of time. All hail the duties and possibilities of the coming twelve months! ~ Edward Payson Powell
- The new year begins in a snow-storm of white vows. ~ George William Curtis
- I don’t understand why Cupid was chosen to represent Valentine’s Day. When I think about romance, the last thing on my mind is a short, chubby toddler coming at me with a weapon. ~ Author Unknown
- Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love. ~ Albert Einstein
- Take away love and our earth is a tomb. ~ Robert Browning
- I need the starshine of your heavenly eyes, After the day’s great sun. ~ Charles Hanson Towne

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

- **Daniel Crute**
- **Seiko Roberts**
- **Eva Thompson**
- **Charles Williams**

A friendly reminder; to offset the cost of this publication, donations to the newsletter are always welcome.
The Communicator is published bi-monthly by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department on Aging through the Older Americans’ Act. We assume no responsibility for the care and return of unsolicited material. Donations are suggested.

If you need assistance call the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

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 on Aging at 1-800-432-3535.

Linda Ramirez, Editor - Emma Fonseca and LaMonica Upton, Contributing Editors

MILL LEVY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Transportation
Demand Response
913-573-8308
(traveling within the Wyandotte County limits only)

Hearing Aid Program
Providence Medical Center
913-596-5143

Vision Screenings
Visiting Nurse Association
816-627-6484

Legal Services
Kansas Legal Services
913-621-0200

CALENDAR

New Years Day Observed
Monday, January 2, 2012
Unified Government offices closed

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, January 16, 2012
Unified Government offices closed

 Presidents’ Day
Monday, February 20, 2012
Unified Government offices closed