The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging (AAA) staff, volunteers and Advisory Council members would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday and a very prosperous new year!

2013 was a very challenging year as the AAA’s took on a new title which is, “Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC’s),” as part of the Governors implementation of KANCARE; the overhaul of the Medicaid system in Kansas. While the change has presented a paradigm shift from the way we have served seniors in the past, it was met with a boots on the ground, grass root level of energy and knowledge that the AAA’s have always historically shown under any previous call of duty. Naturally, it is going to take some time to work all of the kinks out of the new system, as it is with any sweeping change that is brought on this suddenly, and that affects the lives of so many people and different organizations and agencies.

One of the significant changes to the AAA’s as a result of KANCARE, is the younger population that we are now called on to assist in maneuvering Long-Term-Care options. This has proven to be a major learning curve for our staff as we adjust to providing information, assistance, and resources to a much younger consumer than we have historically serviced in the past.

I can proudly say that the local AAA, as well as the other 10 AAA’s across the state have met the challenge that KANCARE has presented. We have kept our commitment to our local constituents, even in an economically unstable environment. The commitment is being that local, knowledgeable, friendly and accessible single point of entry, and the first line of defense as it regards how to access resources, assistance, and information in reference to all of the Long-Term-Care options for consumers and their Caregivers.

So with a new boldness we look right in the face of 2014 with the attitude, “COME ON NEW YEAR WHAT YA GOT FOR ME?? . . WE CAN HANDLE IT!!!”

From all of us here at the Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA/ADRC, “Best wishes for 2014 and we are looking forward to another great and blessed year ahead.”
**Homestead/Safe Senior Rebate**

The Homestead or Safe Senior Rebate is a rebate of a portion of the property taxes paid on a Kansas resident’s home-stead. Homeowners filing for this refund must have been a resident of the State of Kansas for all of the tax year 2013.

**Homestead Property Tax Refund**
Qualifying criteria existed for the entire year of 2013:

- Homeowner born before January 1, 1958 OR
- Totally or permanently Disabled or blind
- You have dependents under 18 that reside with you
- Total Household income of $32,900 or less

**SafeSenior Property Tax Refund**
Qualifying criteria existed for all of 2013:

- Homeowner 65 years or older all of 2013
- Income of $18,200 or less
- Did not have any delinquent property taxes in 2012

Persons seeking assistance from the Clerk’s Office in filing a claim will be required to come into the office. Information will not be taken over the phone. Residency and income guidelines must be met for all programs. Proof-of-income statements for all household members are required for the filing year.

**Senior Citizens Utility Tax Rebate**

The Senior Citizen Utility Tax Rebate Program refunds up to $150 for the franchise fee paid to BPU, Atmos Gas or Kansas Gas and Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. in addition to a refund on the city sales tax which is based on income.

Applications are filled out on a walk-in basis January 2 through March 29, 2013, M-F 8:30a - 4:30p at the Municipal Office Building located at 701 North 7th Street, Suite 323, KCK 66101. The above information can be mailed to the UG Clerk only for the Senior Citizen Utility Tax Rebate Program.

Mail-ins must include a telephone number, social security number and date of birth. Everything mailed in will be returned along with a copy of the application depicting the refund amount. For additional information contact the UG Clerks Office at 913-573-5260.

All applicants are required to provide the following: Proof of Income for self, spouse and anyone else residing in the home from all sources, i.e. social security, pension, W-2’s, interest earned, rental properties, etc; and supporting 2013 utility bills from BPU, Gas and/or Telephone Company.

The County Clerk’s Office is located at the Municipal Office Bldg., located at 701 North 7th Street, Suite 323, KCK 66101. Assistance for these programs will be available starting Wednesday, January 2, 2014 through Monday, April 15, 2014, 8:30a - 4:30p with the exception of holidays. If you have a tax preparer they will complete the applications for you.

**Low Income Energy Assistance Program L.I.E.A.P.**

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 130% of the federal poverty guidelines

Payments will be made to the fuel vendor. For more information or to request an application, please call 1-800-432-0043.
Did you know that you can apply for
“Extra Help”
paying for your
Medicare Costs at any time during
the year!

Medicare Savings Programs and Extra Help are programs that help pay for Medicare costs, such as co-pays and premiums. They may also lower deductibles, co-insurance and prescription drug costs.

If you qualify:
Medicare may pay for most of your prescription drug costs
You may receive help paying:
≈ Premiums
≈ Deductibles
≈ Co-Pays of your Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

For more information contact
Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging SHICK Counselors
913-573-8531

OUR 2014 CALENDARS ARE IN!

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!

Thank You!
Appreciation is extended to the following
who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.

Betty Pearson
If you would like to contribute to the cost of the newsletter, please make checks payable to:
Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA,
1300 North 78th Street, Suite 100, KCK, 66112

Does email work for you?
Help us save postage costs by joining our email club...get information before everyone else!

If interested, send an email to: 60Plus@wycokck.org with your request.
The partner organizations will have trained, certified Healthcare Navigators available on-site at the KCKCC to meet with you and help answer questions you have about the Affordable Care Act (also known as “Obamacare”) and how the changes may affect you and your family.

This event is intended to be educational in nature. A follow-up appointment for one-on-one support, in using the on-line Healthcare Navigator Tool, may be made for those who are interested in accessing this type of assistance.

You will have the chance to sit down with a specialist and discuss your questions and concerns, and make a plan for how to move forward.

Reservations are not required– the Healthcare Navigators will help individuals on a first come, first served basis. Any member of the community may attend.

*A partnership between Wyandot Center, the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging and the Kansas City Kansas Community College*

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The Part A deductible is $1216, an increase of $32.
The Part B deductible is $147, the same as in 2013.

The Part A co-pay for Days 61 - 90 is $304, an increase of $8.
The co-pay for days 91 - 150 is $608, an increase of $16.

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for nearly 63 million Americans will increase 1.5 percent in 2014, the Social Security Administration announced.

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 $117,000 from $113,700. Of the estimated 165 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2014, about 10 million will pay higher taxes as a result of the increase in the taxable maximum.


The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/cola](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/cola).

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 program.

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.

Monies donated to the Kansas Meals on Wheels Fund through the income tax check-off are distributed by the Kansas Department on Aging & Disabilities Services to the local senior nutrition programs according to a formula based on the number of meals served by each program. Those funds helped fill a gap that could have otherwise crippled many meal services across the State.

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 American Act funds to support Meals on Wheels.

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

Southwestern Soup (serves 2-4)

Ingredients:
- 1 8-ounce jar of green salsa (Salsa Verde)
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken
- 1 15-ounce can white northern beans - drained
- 2 cups low-fat, low-salt chicken broth
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp chili powder
- Optional (For garnish)
  - Low-fat sour cream
  - Low-fat Shredded cheddar cheese
  - Sliced green onion
  - Fresh cilantro
  - Baked Tortilla Chips

Directions:
Mix all the soup ingredients into a medium sauce pan over high heat, stir and cook the salsa, chicken, beans, broth, cumin, and chili till boiling.
Lower heat and simmer 7-10 minutes.

Recipe courtesy of sageminder.com

January is National Soup Month!

What better way to combat Kansas unpredictable weather than with a nice pot of homemade SOUP! Did you know that despite the fact that soups usually contain a lot less calories than your typical main dish, they are just as nutritious and filling. Soups are good because they help restore the necessary water balance, which in turn helps keep our blood pressure (and salt content) under control. Consider chicken soup and your grandmother’s ranting about the benefits on cold and flu attacks. Chicken soup in particular, if homemade or organic, has anti-inflammatory effects and can help lessen the symptoms of a cold.

Other benefits of soup are:

- Low in fat (specially saturated fat) Great during dieting periods.
- Great for those who have trouble chewing, digesting or are recuperating from an illness.
- Thick soups can be used as main dishes and are a great way to get more veggies into your diet.
- Most soups now come in a low-fat, low-sodium option for those who want more control over the nutritional content of their diet.
You’ve read this article before, but we believe that it bears repeating. With all of the information that is in the news, radio, internet and via snail mail, it is important to keep track of those things that may affect you.

**NOT** reading your mail could have a negative impact on services, insurances, bills and benefits? In some instances you may even have to deal with legal consequences for not responding to important information.

The Area Agency on Aging **ENCOURAGES** you to take the time to open and read your mail, especially from the following organizations: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); Department for Children and Families (DCF) - Formerly the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services-SRS; Social Security Administration (SSA), and your Insurance companies for Medical, Home Owner’s and Automobile.

With many organizations sharing your information and in some cases selling your information, here are a few ways to ask them to stop.

- **Be Clear:** Whenever you donate money, order products or fill out warranty cards, write in large letters on the paperwork, “**DO NOT SELL/TRADE MY NAME or ADDRESS.**”

- **Donations by telephone:** If you donate by telephone, say “**Please mark my account so that my name is not traded or sold to other companies.**”

- **Avoid filling out “Contest” Entry Forms:** “Contests” where you fill in entry forms are usually fishing expeditions for names. Avoid these.

If you’re unsure of the mail you receive, or have difficulties understanding the contents, first try contacting the organization who sent it. Utilize the toll-free customer service number that is usually printed somewhere in the mailing. Also, you may contact the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531 and ask for an Information Specialist. We will work to assist in any way we can.

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**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (V.I.T.A.)**

For a tax site near you, call AARP toll free at:

1-888-227-7669

The hotline will be available

January 15 - April 15, 2014

24 Hours a day

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Interested or have questions? Contact Linda Ramirez at 913-573-8531 or email at 60Plus@wycokck.org
HISTORY

1. Which disease did Dr. Jonas Salk successfully create a vaccine for in 1952?
   - Polio

2. Which president of the United States was in office from January 20, 1953 to January 20, 1961?
   - Dwight D. Eisenhower

3. Who was the first African American named Supreme Court Justice in 1967?
   - Thurgood Marshall

4. Which president resigned in 1974 over the Watergate scandal?
   - Richard M. Nixon

5. What does the letter “S” in Harry S. Truman’s name stand for?
   - Anderson Shipp Truman and Solomon Young, “The Price is Right”

MUSIC/MOVIES/POP CULTURE

6. Which singer had a hit with Sixteen Tons in 1955?
   - Tennessee Ernie Ford

7. Which television game show first aired in 1956 and is still running today?
   - The Price Is Right

8. Which actor won the Oscar for Best Actor for his role in the 1962 film To Kill a Mockingbird?
   - Gregory Peck

9. In which year did the Woodstock Festival take place?
   - 1969

10. Which product did Proctor and Gamble launch in 1966 that revolutionized baby care?
    - Pampers disposable diapers

Answers:

- Polio
- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Thurgood Marshall
- Richard M. Nixon
- Anderson Shipp Truman and Solomon Young
- Tennessee Ernie Ford
- The Price is Right
- Gregory Peck
- 1969
- Pampers disposable diapers
The Communicator is published bi-monthly by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services through the Older Americans’ Act. We assume no responsibility for the care and return of unsolicited material. Donations are suggested.

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age national origin, sex, or handicap.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services at 1-800-432-3535.

Linda Ramirez, Editor
Emma Fonseca, Contributing Editor
LaMonica Upton, Contributing Editor

New Years Day - January 1, 2014
AAA Office Closed

Martin Luther King Day - January 20, 2014
AAA Office Closed

Happy Valentine’s Day - February 14, 2014

Presidents’ Day - February 17, 2014
AAA Office Closed

Spring Holiday - April 18, 2014
AAA Office Closed

Last Day to Apply for LIEAP and Senior Citizens Utility Tax Rebate—March 31, 2014

Income Tax Deadline
April 15, 2014