IT’S YOUR DUTY:  GET OUT AND VOTE!

Every eligible American citizen is being called on to perform one of the most important acts of citizenship. They will be called on to VOTE. Far too many do not recognize the importance of voting. Many people find the weakest of excuses not to vote. Some people even try to go as far as to discourage or block others who might disagree with them from voting.

Think for a moment what our great country would be if decisions were left to a few people who could not be held accountable by those whom the decision affected. Voting is the most productive way to hold people accountable for the decisions they make. Voting is also the most responsible way for each of us to take part in determining the direction of our country.

When you are one of the many millions of eligible voters, it is easy to think your vote doesn’t make a difference. We may feel this way because we can’t see the connection between our vote and the decisions made by those we elect. We may hold this view because we think that, since so many have a different point of view, ours won’t count. We may feel our candidates will win anyway so they don’t need our single vote.

Democracy only works when we all vote. We may not know you or your opinion. We may agree or disagree with your views. But your vote gives our votes meaning.

So, vote! Encourage your family and friends to vote! America needs Americans to vote!

NOTE: To vote, Kansas law requires all voters to show approved photo identification. Photo identification must include the name and photo of the registered voter. Any of the following documents may be used as photo identification for voting in Kansas.

- Driver’s License or ID Card issued by any state or district of the United States.
- U.S. Passport.
- Student ID Card issued by an accredited Kansas college or university.
- Government employee badge or ID.
- Concealed carry license issued by any state or district of the United States.
- Public assistance ID issued by a municipal, county, state or federal government office.
- Persons age 65 or older may use an expired photo ID.

Questions/concerns may be directed to the Wyandotte County Election office, 850 State Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas 66101 or by dialing 913-573-8500.

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**VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION HELD**

On Thursday, September 22, 2016, the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging held its Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the Armourdale Recreation Center. Mayor Mark Holland, UG Commissioner, Melissa Bynum, the Mayor’s Chief of Staff, Maureen Mahoney and Community Relations Director, Shaya Patrick joined in the festivities. The “fiesta” themed event catered to the 47 volunteers listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Site/Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allen, Valerie</td>
<td>Argentine Meal Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Donna</td>
<td>Westgate Meal Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angello, Mary</td>
<td>Advisory Council Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barnett, Ada</td>
<td>Vaughndale Meal Site</td>
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<td>Belcher, Alice</td>
<td>Plaza Towers Meal Site</td>
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<td>Bell, Modestine</td>
<td>Silver Haired Legislator</td>
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<td>Berry, Patricia</td>
<td>In-House Volunteer</td>
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<td>Bersch, Linda</td>
<td>Plaza Towers Meal Site</td>
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<td>Betts, Carolyn</td>
<td>Rosedale Towers Meal Site</td>
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<td>Brunson, Alice</td>
<td>Strangers Rest Meal Site</td>
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<td>Carroll, Joy</td>
<td>Strangers Rest Meal Site</td>
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<td>Chander, Stefica</td>
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<td>Coles, Helena</td>
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<td>Davis, Jane</td>
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<td>Emerson, Tanya</td>
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<td>Estes, Dixie</td>
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<td>Friday, Curtis</td>
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<td>Fuentes, Juanita</td>
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<td>Gordon, Thomas</td>
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<td>Greathouse, Betty</td>
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<td>Guy, Cheryl</td>
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<td>Higgs, Jessie</td>
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<td>Hund, Shirley</td>
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<td>Jackson, Bobbie</td>
<td>Vernon Center Meal Site</td>
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<td>Johnson, Dorothy</td>
<td>Rosedale Towers Meal Site</td>
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<td>Johnson, Linda</td>
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<td>Jones, Laleta</td>
<td>In-House Volunteer</td>
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<td>Jones, Lorene</td>
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<td>Keohane, Mike</td>
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<td>Mahoney, Richard</td>
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<td>Milan Sr., Robert L.</td>
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<td>McGinnis, Susan</td>
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<td>Minnick, Rick</td>
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<td>Mitchell, Janet</td>
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<td>O’Neal, Carroll</td>
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<td>Poyor, Ida</td>
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<td>Smith, Ruby</td>
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<td>Spencer, Bobby</td>
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<td>Spero, David</td>
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<td>Spero, Joan</td>
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<td>Welton, Evelyn</td>
<td>Silver Haired Legislator</td>
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<td>White, Joyce</td>
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<td>Williams, Charles</td>
<td>Advisory Council Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wortheam, Elvira</td>
<td>Advisory Council Member</td>
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VOLUNTEERS...We Appreciate All of You!
Dear Newsletter Recipient:

For years "The Communicator" has served as a vital means for providing seniors in Wyandotte County important information regarding aging news, events, programs, services and much more! The newsletter’s continuity depends on your donations for its existence. Please help us continue to provide this important publication by becoming a sponsor!

Respectfully,
The Newsletter Committee

Appreciation is extended to the following who have contributed toward the cost of this newsletter.
Names are listed in alphabetical order.

- Charles A. Bea (Patron)
- LaLeta Jones (Contributor)
- Seiko Roberts (Patron)
- Edna L. Thomas (Contributor)

If you would like to contribute to the cost of the newsletter, please make checks payable to:
Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA, Attn: The Communicator
849 North 47th, Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102

Does Email Work for You?

By joining our email club, you’ll get information before everyone else!

Send an email to: 60Plus@wycock.org with your request.

The Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) wants Kansans to have electric, gas and water services needed to keep their home warm during the winter. The KCC also recognizes the customers’ responsibility to make arrangements to pay for that service. The Cold Weather Rule was designed in 1983 to ensure that both goals are met.

COLD WEATHER RULE

The Cold Weather Rule prohibits a utility company from disconnecting gas or electric utility service that is necessary to operate home heating equipment (such as a furnace) due to nonpayment of a utility bill during times of extreme cold.

How do you sign up?

If you can’t pay your entire bill, call your utility company to make pay arrangements:

- Agree to pay 1/12 of the overdue amount of your bill, plus 1/12 of your current bill, all disconnection and connection fees and agree to pay the remainder in equal payments over the next 11 months; or
- Negotiate a payment plan to pay the overdue amount off quicker than 12 months.

Remember, you must also pay your full bills for new service you use while paying off the overdue amount.

Apply for federal, state, local or special funds for which you are eligible. If you are behind in a previous payment plan and cannot catch up, you need to make a new payment agreement with the utility company.

If you have illegally used service, you must pay for the value of the illegally used service.

What will the utility company do?

- Utilities must inform you of the Cold Weather Rule payment plan as well as other available payment plans. Remember, under the Cold Weather Rule, you always have the option of spreading your payment over a total of 12 months.
- Utilities must send written notice to customers 10 days before disconnection, plus attempt a phone call or personal contact the day before.
- Utilities must tell customers about agencies that have funds to help pay utility bills.

Can you be disconnected during the Cold Weather Rule?

- A utility can’t disconnect you when the temperature is forecasted to drop below 35 degrees or be in the mid to low 30s over the next 24 hours, except in certain circumstances.
- To prevent disconnection when it is 35 degrees or above, or to be reconnected regardless of temperature, you must make pay arrangement with your utility.
- A utility may start the final notification and disconnection process if there is a 48 hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.
- On the day before disconnection, a utility must attempt to contact you by phone. If that fails, they must go to the home and notify you or leave a message on the door. Some utilities have a third party notification plan.
- If the 48 hour forecast changes before the period ends and there is a forecast of below 35 degrees, the utility cannot disconnect until there is another cold weather rule 48 hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

The Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) wants Kansans to have electric, gas and water services needed to keep their home warm during the winter. The KCC also recognizes the customers’ responsibility to make arrangements to pay for that service. The Cold Weather Rule was designed in 1983 to ensure that both goals are met.
PREPARE YOURSELF FOR TAX TIME
Before you begin to prepare your income tax return, go through the following checklist. Not every category will apply to you, so just pick those that do and make sure you have that information available. You’ll be surprised at how much time you’ll save by organizing your information beforehand.

☑ PERSONAL INFORMATION: Social Security number for you and your dependents; copy of last year’s tax return and your bank routing and account numbers for direct deposits.

☑ INCOME INFORMATION: W-2’s, 1099’s, SSA benefits received, misc. income such as Medical Savings Account, gambling winnings, etc.

☑ DEDUCTIONS AND CREDITS: Child care costs, education costs, 1098’s (mortgage interest and points you paid), charitable donations, charity receipts, medical and dental expense records.

For further assistance or questions regarding the upcoming tax season, contact your tax professional.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL CAREGIVER MONTH
Family caregivers are the bedrock of America’s long-term care system and come from all walks of life. Every day they assist relatives and loved ones with chores, cooking and cleaning, to complex care such as bathing, dressing, moving around the home and lifesaving measures such as administering medications and monitoring side effects.

Family caregivers may be adult children caring for their parents, grandparents raising their grandchildren, or families looking after children and adults with physical disabilities. Caregivers are devoted spouses, parents, children as well as nurses, home health aides, paralegals and financial advisors for their loved ones.

National research has shown that caregivers everywhere and their numbers are growing.

Although most caregivers view their work as rewarding, many experience significant stress and negative health impacts. To help alleviate the toll of caregiving, family caregivers need supports and services that safeguard their health and emotional well-being while relieving some of the financial burdens that often accompany caregiving duties.

If you are a caregiver and you’re feeling the pressure of your duties call the Area Agency on Aging office at 913-573-8531 for assistance.

NOVIEMBRE ES MES NACIONAL DEL CUIDADOR
Los cuidadores de la familia son el cimiento del sistema del cuidado a largo plazo de América y éstos se encuentran en todas las clases sociales. Diariamente asisten a parientes y seres queridos con las tareas que se extienden de ayudas simples tales como lavar ropa, cocinar y limpiar la casa al cuidado complejo como bañarse, vestirse, moverse alrededor en el hogar, y medidas más complejas tales como administración de medicamentos y supervisión de condiciones médicas.

Los cuidadores de la familia pueden ser hijos adultos que cuidan de sus padres, abuelos que crian a sus nietos, o las familias que se ocupan de niños y adultos con incapacidades físicas. Los cuidadores son esposos, padres, o hijos devotos así como enfermeras, asistentes de la salud casera, trabajadores legales, y consejeros financieros para sus seres queridos. Los estudios nacionales han demostrado que el numero de cuidadores está creciendo y se encuentran en todos los niveles sociales.

Aunque la mayoría de los cuidadores ven su trabajo ya recayendo, muchos experimentan tensión significativa impactando negativamente la salud. Para ayudar a aliviar el costo del cuidado de los familiares, los cuidadores necesitan las ayudas y los servicios que protejan su salud y bienestar emocional mientras que reduzcan parte de las responsabilidades financieras que acompañan los deberes del cuidado a sus familias.

Si usted es un cuidador y usted está sintiendo la presión de sus deberes, llame la oficina de la Agencia de Servicios para los Envejecientes al 913-573-8531 para obtener ayuda.

FLU SEASON IS HERE
Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions are at high risk for serious flu complications. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year.

You may contact the Wyandotte County Health Department at 913-573-8855 or your own health care provider for the 2016-17 vaccination.
National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, which is annually on December 7, commemorates the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii during World War II. Many American service men and women lost their lives or were injured on December 7, 1941. National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is also referred to as Pearl Harbor Day.

**VOLUNTEER CALLING IT QUITS AFTER 15 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Ms. Bobbie Jackson will hang-up her apron after 15 years of dedicated volunteer service as a congregate meal Site Leader at Vernon Center. She has proved to be a loyal and committed volunteer worker with noticeable service that is commendable. Now that she has ended her volunteer service, she plans to travel with her family and stay active doing little things that spark her interest. Ms. Bobbie will be missed among our staff, other congregate meal site leaders and participants, as she embarks on a new chapter in her life. Thank you and congratulations Ms. Bobbie on your retirement!

**TIME TO FALL BACK!**

Most of the United States begins Daylight Saving Time at 2am on the second Sunday in March and reverts to standard time on the first Sunday in November. In the US, each time zone switches at a different time.

Twice a year, when Daylight Savings Time begins or ends, make it a habit to not only change your clocks, but do a few other semi-annual tasks that will improve safety in your home:

- Change the batteries in your smoke detectors
- Prepare a disaster supply kit for your house (water, food, flashlights, batteries and blankets).
- Check and discard expired medications. Those dates really DO have meaning. Some very common over-the-counter medications can cause serious problems due to change through aging.

**AREAWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND SILVER-HAIRED LEGISLATORS FROM WYANDOTTE AND LEAVENWORTH ATTENDED ADVOCACY TRAINING**

Both the Wyandotte and Leavenworth county delegations of the Areawide Advisory Council and the Silver Haired Legislators participated in a webinar titled, *No Fear Advocacy: Tools & Techniques for Aging Network Stakeholders*. The event was well attended and participants enjoyed the viewing.

The presentation included *Advocacy Basics, What to Expect, Framing the Message, Building Relationships* and was designed to give new members the guidance they need to move forward in their advocacy efforts.

**VOLUNTEER NEEDED!**

**Title:** Assistant Site Leader

**What:** Serve hot meals to seniors

**When:** Monday - Friday

**Where:** Vernon Center

3436 N 27th Street, KCK

If interested, please contact Betty Ewell at the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging.

913-573-8531
How Seniors Get Open Enrollment Wrong

Medicare can be tricky to navigate, even for seniors who’ve been enrolled for years. This quick rundown highlights some of the most common mistakes to watch for.

Not understanding the difference between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage. With Original Medicare you’ll pay a monthly premium for Part B coverage, and Part A coverage is typically premium-free if you or your spouse paid Medicare taxes while you were working. You can visit virtually any doctor or specialist you like and your claims are usually filed for you. Medicare Advantage, however, is a different story. Your monthly costs, co-pays and deductible vary based on what the plan charges. You’re also limited to visiting doctors, hospitals and specialists that are part of the plan’s network. Moving to Medicare Advantage from Original Medicare or vice versa without being clear on the details could be problematic later on if it bumps up your out-of-pocket costs or you’re not able to see your preferred doctor.

Thinking Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement Insurance are the same thing. While Original Medicare offers more flexibility in choosing healthcare providers, it doesn’t cover everything. Adding on Medicare Supplement Insurance, also known as a Medigap plan, is one way to fill the holes in your coverage. Where people often go wrong is thinking that the supplemental plans are the equivalent of Medicare Advantage. Another error is switching from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage and dropping your Medigap plan without understanding the implications. Once you make that move, you may not be eligible to get a Medigap plan again if you decide to go back to Original Medicare.

Not taking the time to compare Medicare Advantage options. Original Medicare is more or less a one-size-fits-all proposition, but Medicare Advantage allows you some wiggle room when it comes to choosing a plan that’s tailored to your needs. Medicare Advantage providers can vary greatly in terms of how their plans are structured, so you could be selling yourself short if you’re not shopping around. Taking a look at which prescription drugs you’re currently taking, where your doctors are located, which pharmacies you use, your existing health conditions and any other health insurance you already have can help you pin down a plan that’s suited to your situation.

Overlooking financial assistance. Even with Medicare Part D, prescription-drug costs can still be astronomical. If you’re working with a smaller budget because you weren’t able to build up a large enough nest egg, there is help available, but you have to act to take advantage of it. You can apply for the Extra Help program through the Social Security Administration, which estimates that the benefits are worth around $4,000 per year. You have to be enrolled in Part D to be eligible, so if you haven’t signed up for that yet, you’ll need to do that first.

The Bottom Line
The very worst thing you can do during Open Enrollment is to get frustrated and choose a plan without thinking things through. The best way to avoid that is by penciling Open Enrollment in on your calendar each year, so you have plenty of time to prepare. The more thought you put into your Medicare needs beforehand, the greater the likelihood of ending up with a plan that’s going to save you the most over the long term.

Information in this article was shared from the following webpage:
http://www.investopedia.com/articles/retirement/072716/4-medicare-open-enrollment-mistakes-avoid.asp
Easy Beef Stroganoff

**Ingredients:**
- 1 (8 oz. pkg.) egg noodles
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 (10.75 oz pkg.) can fat free condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- Salt & pepper to taste

**Directions:**
1) Prepare the egg noodles according to package directions and set aside.
2) In a separate large skillet over medium heat, sauté the ground beef over medium heat for 5 to 10 minutes, or until browned. Drain the fat and add the soup and garlic powder. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3) Remove from heat and combine the meat mixture with the egg noodles. Add the sour cream, stirring well and season with salt and pepper to taste.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

*Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.*
Wyandotte/Leavenworth
Area Agency on Aging
849 North 47th Street - Suite C
Kansas City, Kansas 66102
Phone: 913-573-8531
Fax: 913-573-8577
Email: 60Plus@wycokck.org

DisABLED or 60PLUS?...Call on Us!

The Communicator is published bi-monthly
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on Aging. It is funded by the Kansas Department
for Aging and Disability Services through the
Older Americans’ Act. We assume no responsibility
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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

coming soon >>>

ELECTION DAY
Tuesday, November 8, 2016

VETERANS’ DAY
Thursday, November 11, 2016
Unified Government Office Closed

THANKSGIVING DAY
Thursday, November 24, 2016
Unified Government Office Closed

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Friday, November 25, 2016
Unified Government Office Closed

christmas eve
Saturday, December 24, 2016

christmas day
Sunday, December 25, 2016

christmas holiday
Monday, December 26, 2016
Unified Government Office Closed

new year’s eve
Saturday, December 31, 2016

new year’s day
Sunday, January 1, 2017

new year’s holiday observed
January 2, 2017
Unified Government Office Closed