FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

If any of you feel like me, sometimes you just have to turn the TV off, due to all of the negative, sad and tragic news that is always being reported. It never stops does it? For we live in a 24 hour news cycle that seems to be never ending. Remember the good ole’ days when the TV would turn off sometime after midnight, and all you would see was the colorful stripes on the screen? Those days are gone forever. However, there IS some good news to share with the seniors of our community.

While we are all aware of the cuts that just about every demographic has experienced across the State. The good news is, “the Unified Government Commission adopted a 2017 budget that cuts the city’s property tax rate while investing in core services. By doing so, it responded to the priorities our residents have expressed in a recent Community Survey and the Listening tour my office conducted,” said Mayor/CEO Mark R. Holland. Thankfully for the seniors of this community, the 2017 budget approved and adopted by the Unified Government Commission included funding for the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

What does this mean to the seniors? I am glad you asked. The Senior Care Act program (SCA), administered by the Wyandotte/Leavenworth (AAA) took a 40% reduction in funding from the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. The SCA program is based on a sliding fee scale and allows seniors, 60 years of age or older who are not Medicaid eligible and meet a certain Level of Care score the ability to access services. These in-home supports allow them the independence to age in place in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Homemakers, attendant care, medical equipment, grab bars, dentures, shower chairs, etc. are types of assistance offered with the SCA program. A 40% reduction in funding meant that the AAA would be forced to implement a wait list for these services, as well; many clients already on services endured cuts in the level of services they currently receive. The one-time service for medical equipment, etc., would be eliminated. The funding adopted by the Unified Government’s Commission will allow the AAA to address the needs and gaps that were created by the state budget cuts.

We the staff of the AAA, our Advisory Board, and the seniors of Wyandotte County would like to thank our County Administrative staff and the Unified Government Commission for unanimously supporting and voting to invest in core services. These types of services, dramatically and positively affect the lives of our most valuable and precious resources, the seniors and retirees of our community.

Please take time to write or call your commissioner and/or Mayor and thank them for taking care and being a listening ear to the older adults of Wyandotte County.
OPERATION RED FILE

Operation RED FILE identifies your emergency information during a crisis or medical emergency.

Operation RED FILE allows First Responders (Police & Fire) quick and easy access to your medical and emergency information.

OCTOBER 17, 2016
9AM - 1PM

KCKCC Technical College
6565 State Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66102

◊ Medicare Counseling WILL be available at this event.
◊ Congressman Kevin Yoder will be in attendance and a continental breakfast will be served.
◊ Bring your Medicare Card and a list of your current prescriptions!

Thank you!

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

Mary Carter (Patron)
Wanda Collins (Contributor)
Pauline Estell (Patron)
Norma Steele (Patron)
Mildred Winston (Patron)

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@wycokck.org with your request.
When is Medicare Open Enrollment for 2017?

For 2017 Medicare coverage, open enrollment is in the fall of 2016, from October 15 to December 7.

During this annual enrollment period (AEP) you can make changes to various aspects of your coverage. You can switch from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage, or vice versa.

You can also switch from one Medicare Advantage plan to another, or from one Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plan to another. If you didn’t enroll in a Medicare Part D plan when you were first eligible, you can do so during the general open enrollment, although a late enrollment penalty may apply.

If you want to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan, you must meet some basic criteria.

- You must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and B.
- You must live in the plan’s service area.
- You cannot have End-Stage Renal Disease (some exceptions apply).

Is auto-renewal available?

If you’re already enrolled in a Medicare Part D prescription plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan and you don’t want to make changes to your coverage for 2017, you don’t need to do anything during open enrollment, assuming your current plan will still be available in 2017. If your plan is being discontinued and isn’t eligible for renewal, you will receive a non-renewal notice from your carrier prior to open enrollment. If you don’t, it means you can keep your plan without doing anything during open enrollment.

But be aware that your benefits and premium could be changing for 2017. So even if you’re confident that you want to keep your current coverage for the coming year, it’s important to make sure you understand any changes that may apply, and that you’ve double checked to make sure that your current plan is still the best available option.

The available plans and what they cover changes from one year to the next, so even if the plan you have now was the best option when you shopped last year, it’s important to verify that again before you lock yourself in for another year.

Changing Medicare Advantage coverage after the AEP

Between January 1 and February 14 each year, if you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, you can leave your plan and return to original Medicare. You cannot switch to another Advantage plan unless you have a circumstance that affords you a Special Enrollment Period.

After you leave your plan, you will have until February 14 to enroll in a Part D plan that will begin the first day of the following month that you enroll.

Enrolling in Original Medicare

If you didn’t sign up for Medicare A and B when you were first eligible, you have a chance to do so each year from January 1 to March 31, with coverage effective July 1. You may be subject to a late enrollment penalty however. For Medicare Part B, the penalty is an additional 10 percent of the premium for each 12 month period that you were eligible but not enrolled.
The Dress for Success project offered school uniforms to qualified grandparents raising their grandchildren. Twenty-four grandparents received assistance with forty-nine grandchildren. Each grandchild received two uniforms, socks and a backpack full of school supplies for the 2016-2017 school year.

The Area Agency on Aging worked with the Kansas City Kansas-USD500 to identify these grandparents raising their grandchildren.

Funding was provided through the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, Older Americans Act and the Family Caregiver Support Program.

Pictured here are some of the 2016 Dress for Success Program recipients.
The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging sponsored a group of 20 seniors to Union Station on August 11, 2016. The day began with an early lunch, and ended with a bus ride back to the Area Agency on Aging. While out, the seniors experienced a ride on Streetcar KC, a 360-degree projection experience featuring Stargaze Kansas City in the Arvin Gottlieb Planetarium and entrance to the Body Worlds & The Cycle of Life, a world class, educational exhibition revealing the human body's transformation through time.

CONFUSED ABOUT MEDICARE

INFORMATIONAL SESSION
Monday September 19, 2016
at 1:00pm
for an informational session at
Metropolitan Baptist Church
853 Washington Blvd
Kansas City, KS 66104

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS???

For additional information contact:
LaToya Ladd at 913-573-8545
FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS
Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Prevent falls with these simple fall-prevention measures, from reviewing your medications to hazard proofing your home.

Fall prevention may not seem like a lively topic, but it’s important. As you get older physical changes, health conditions and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions make falls more likely. In fact, falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults. Still, fear of falling doesn’t need to rule your life. Instead, consider six simple fall prevention strategies:

1) Make an appointment with your doctor.
   - Make a list of your prescription and over-the-counter medications and supplements, or bring them with you to the appointment. Your doctor can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling.
   - If you have fallen before, write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time.
   - Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Your doctor may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style as well.

2) Keep moving.
   - Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your doctor’s OK, consider activities such as walking, gentle exercises that involve slow and graceful dance-like movements.
   - If you avoid physical activity because you’re afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your doctor.

3) Wear sensible shoes.
   - Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall-prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall. Wear properly fitting sturdy shoes with nonskid soles.

4) Remove home hazards.
   - Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical and phone cords from walkways.
   - Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
   - Use nonslip mats in your bathtub and showers.

5) Light up your living space.
   - Place a lamp within reach of your bed for middle-of-the-night needs.
   - Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
   - Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

6) Use assistive devices.
   - Hand rails, nonslip treads for bare wood steps, a raised toilet seat and grab bars for the shower or tub can assist you with unsteadiness.

The Mayo Clinic

FREE MEMORY SCREENINGS
Have you noticed yourself or someone else?
- Becoming more forgetful.
- Having trouble concentrating.
- Experiencing difficulty performing familiar tasks.
- Having trouble recalling words or names in conversation.
- Having family or friends telling you that you are repeating questions or saying the same thing over and over again.
- Misplacing things more often.
- Having family or friends notice changes in your mood, behavior, personality, or desire to do things.

If you answered “yes” to any of the above behaviors, you may want to consider signing up for a Free Memory Screening conducted by the KU Department of Neurology.

For more information, call Trish Weatherspoon at 913-945-5023.
Homemade Flour Tortillas

Ingredients:
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 tablespoons lard
- 1 1/2 cups water

Directions:
1. Whisk the flour, salt and baking powder together in a mixing bowl. Mix in the lard with your fingers until the dough resembles corn meal. Add the water and mix until the dough comes together; place on a lightly floured surface and knead a few minutes until smooth and elastic. Divide the dough into 24 equal pieces and roll each piece into a ball.

2. Preheat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Use a well-floured rolling pin to roll dough ball into a thin, round tortilla. Place into the hot skillet and cook until bubbly and golden; flip and continue cooking until golden on the other side. Place the cooked tortilla in a tortilla warmer; continue rolling and cooking the remaining dough.

Yields 2 dozen tortillas

---

FALL

Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid.

```
Y F S B H T R T D Q K O E V N G H M A S K T R A C
F A R N I S A L T J C E B M H E P A B O A U E U A
M K D U O C A P T T A O T O T R W Y L E F O D T N
T L R S K T N U O E C C S A H Z E W R L Q E I U D
E F S C T J E B Q F M T K S Y W N T O O O A C M Y
D W A Y J N E L V S S U F O D T R H X R T W R N C
I B B O L R E Z E F Y R T L L O D A S C L R E D O
R X D Y F J H R Y K A A L S K A X U P Q U D Y E R
Y D K E W B N A A A S A Z C O H N N B T C D A H N
A A S P H E F R N P B O I B F C S T M Z A A D A S
H T D D B V Z L C T D R Z Z N T W E E Q C S R R A
L E X S G Z F H O Y T U N M Q A N D B R P N O V L
R E M M U S F O D N E X A B P P X H G Y N I B E I
W E A U C B F M E D I C A R E N Q O Y P T G A S Z
E H U V S P M T I P E R I F G I N U X F C E L T G
I N H F E E Y U W I T C H E S K N S L D A B K O J
I M R A E S J L L N F M G A K P K E H I S L B J A
T U P K P A T R I O T D A Y J Y M W L R C F L G G K
K L A T S N R O C D C H E T V U E A A N I A U Y N
S R W V M F O P C Z Q G O K W P M R F N A F I P Z
B O B F O R A P P L E S G I V A E B S T E K C A J
Z I L H O W C R J Q K F U T T C K J A V W E F T Q
G I O R J R O V M U A C A O F H Q E F X K L E Y R
R O R A F H Y E E R H S W C V Z O X C P W S T R
```
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!

calendar >>>

LABOR DAY
Monday, September 5, 2016
Unified Government Office Closed

GRANDPARENTS’ DAY
Sunday, September 11, 2016

PATRIOT DAY
Sunday, September 11, 2016

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

coming soon >>>

COLUMBUS DAY
Monday, October 10, 2016

OPEN ENROLLMENT EVENT
October 17, 2016
9am - 1pm
KCKCC Technical College

HALLOWEEN
Monday, October 31, 2016