

COMING OF AGE

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Tri-County Council on Aging

The Tri-County Council on Aging held it's last meeting of 2007 in November. Several members, as well as donors, were honored at the meeting, closing a full year of the Council's efforts.



Those who were honored included:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kenneth Mills | Gail VanDalsem | Gail O'Connor |
| Lou Wilcoxson | Saint Francis Hospice | Forest Pharmaceuticals |
| Salvation Army | Dewey and Oralene Sherbon | Car Mart |
| Central Center in Centennial Park | Williams Produce | |

Thoughts to Ponder

"By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest."

Chinese philosopher Confucius (551-479 BC)

A special thank you to all of our very dedicated council members for all they do:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Glenda Armstrong | Betty Boyd | Daisy Burrus |
| David Carson | Margaret Carson | Albert Collier |
| Jan Davis | Bob Dick | Darrell Gilbert |
| Ronald Harnden | Tammy Harvey | Mary Ann Koepp |
| Brenda Marquez | Kenneth Mills | Carolyn McGhay |
| Frank McGilbra | Carolyn Neill | Glen Neill |
| Gail O'Connor | DeVolla Platt | Samuel Parker |
| Eva-Pope Garrett | Martha Rains | Tyka Ratliff |
| Paul Shireman | Jan Stadler | Gail VanDalsem |
| Jennifer Thompson | Stacie Ware | Lou Wilcoxson |
| Lois Williams | Tommie Williams | Buck Willis |
| Geraldine Wilson | Cecil Wood | Connie Lou Wood |
| Shirley Marie Wright | Rev. Richard Ziglar | |

(Continued on Pg. 3)



Directors Update

Clark D. Miller

Director, Tulsa Area Agency on Aging

Many of us have said, “I don’t mind change as long as it is happening to someone else.” In the aging network, as in life, change happens slowly, and then suddenly everything is different. In November, I attended a planning and strategy workshop sponsored by the Administration on

Aging and the Scripps Gerontology Center in Oxford, Ohio. As it turned out, the purpose of the workshop was to educate AAA Directors about the need for change, and more importantly, what the change to the aging network is going to look like.

The moniker for the new aging network is “Choices for Independence”, and it incorporates the ideas of consumer empowerment, greater long-term care choices for high risk individuals, and the promotion and support of healthy lifestyles.

To support consumer empowerment, Aging Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) have been established in 43 of the 50 states. Oklahoma is one of the seven states without an ADRC. If AAA’s are chosen to coordinate ADRC’s, it will require us to expand Information & Assistance and Case Management services to people over the age of 21 with disabilities.

The second element will focus on nursing home diversion programs, with the goal of keeping people independent rather than seeking placement in nursing homes. This will require continued support of the ADvantage program that is administered through the Long-Term Care Authority (LTCA). LTCAs’ mission has been to develop a long-term care service delivery system for all consumers needing community-based, long-term care that has quality, coordinated, cost-effective consumer services. The greatest challenge for this system will be the coordination of all the service providers to support this effort in a cost effective manner. Unless this service is carefully managed, it could be a budget breaker. Even more importantly, without ADvantage, there will never be enough money to support nursing home care for all the senior citizens in need.

The third element will be promoting healthy lifestyles by allowing people make informed choices about diet and exercise.

The Administration on Aging is asking the AAA network to forego federal funding increases for Title III programs, in order to allow funding for these new initiatives. How this “change” is received by the AAA network will have a great impact on whether these new initiatives are successful.

Senior Oklahoman Poetry Contest



The Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division is seeking entries for its annual Senior Oklahoman Poetry Contest. The contest is held in conjunction with Oklahoma's celebration of May as Older Americans Month.

"Poets may write on any topic," said Lance Robertson, DHS' Aging Services' Director. "We usually receive more than 300 entries, and they cover a broad range of topics from humorous accounts of past experiences to very inspiring messages from people with great insight of life and living."

Contestants must be 60 or older and be a resident of Oklahoma. All poetry must be original, and each contestant may submit no more than three poems.

Entries must be received by February 1st.

All appropriate entries will be published in a booklet that will be distributed during the Oklahoma Conference on Aging.

Entries should be sent to Claire Dowers-Nichols at the Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division; 2401 N.W. 23rd St., Suite 40; Oklahoma City, OK 73107.

Contest winners will be notified by May 2, so they may attend the conference and be recognized during a ceremony on Senior Day, May 21. The winners will also be invited to read their poems during the ceremony.

For information regarding the format required for poetry submission, ask your local Area Agency on Aging by calling the Senior Info-Line at (800) 211-2116 or by calling DHS' Aging Services Division at (405) 521-2281.

Tulsa World, Dec. 25, 2007

Seeking Volunteers for Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature

The Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature (OSHL) is seeking volunteers to advocate for legislation to improve the lives of older Oklahomans.

OSHL provides an opportunity to become educated in the legislative process through direct involvement. This organization has been instrumental in the passage of many bills and resolutions that benefit senior citizens. One of the most recent being the Silver Alert system designed to assist in locating seniors with Dementia or Alzheimer's that have wandered off.

OSHL meetings are held every third Wednesday at 1:30p.m. at the Tulsa Area Aging. To qualify, candidates must be sixty years of age or older, and a registered voter in the State of Oklahoma.

If interested please contact Allecia Ratliff with the Tulsa Area Agency on Aging at 596-7687 or aratliff@cityoftulsa.org.





Reducing Your Home Energy Costs

As the coldest months of Winter arrive, our heating bills will inevitably go up. There are a few ways to keep your home a little warmer and your costs down.

Increasing the energy-efficiency of your home can significantly reduce your monthly energy bills. The New Hampshire Energy Programs Resource Library has lots of quick tips to reduce your home energy costs, and the Weatherization Assistance Program can help even further for low-income families.

There are quite a few tips on making your home more energy-efficient as well as simple things you can do to reduce the energy you use.

- ✓ Use pots and pans the same size as the burners to reduce heat loss.
- ✓ Make sure the reflector pans beneath the stove's heating elements are bright and clean. They reflect heat onto the bottom of the cookware.
- ✓ Don't line oven racks with foil. It blocks the heat flow and makes the oven work harder to cook food.
- ✓ Preheat the oven only when necessary. Many foods don't require it.
- ✓ Don't peek into the oven. Each time the door is opened, the temperature drops 25 to 50 degrees.

- ✓ Most of the energy used in washing laundry is used to heat the water. Use warm or cold water when possible, and always rinse with cold water.
- ✓ Don't over wash. A 10-minute cycle is usually enough for even very soiled clothes.
- ✓ Do two or more laundry loads in a row.
- ✓ Clean the lint filter after every load.
- ✓ Arrange contents in your refrigerator and freezer to allow air circulation.
- ✓ Refrigerators and freezers operate most efficiently when full but not overcrowded.
- ✓ Don't put uncovered liquids in the refrigerator. They force the unit to work harder to remove the moisture.
- ✓ Keep the freezer full by filling plastic milk bottles with water.
- ✓ Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator.
- ✓ Clean dust from refrigerator coils.



- ✓ Once or twice a year, drain a bucket of water from the water heater to remove sediment that can reduce the efficiency of the unit.
- ✓ Pull the plug on instant-on appliances (such as televisions) when you don't plan to use them for a few days or more. They draw current even when switched off.
- ✓ Keep windows clean to let in more natural lighting.
- ✓ Install energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights. They use as much as 75% less energy than regular bulbs.
- ✓ Replace air filters once a month during the heating season, or as needed.
- ✓ Clean hot-air registers, baseboard heaters and radiators as needed.
- ✓ Insulate attics and walls.
- ✓ Seal around areas such as windows, doors, bathroom vents and chimneys where heat can escape.

Weatherizing your home can become a costly endeavor. The U.S. Department of Energy, through the Weatherization Assistance Program, enables low-income families to reduce their average annual energy bills by improving home energy efficiency. Weatherization encompasses a wide variety of cost-effective energy efficiency measures including heating and cooling systems, electrical system, and energy-consuming appliances. Specific services include the installation of energy-efficient measures such as attic insulation, caulking and weather stripping, air sealing and heating and cooling adjustments. An energy audit is conducted on each home to determine the energy conserving measures that will be installed, and an average of \$2,500 is spent on materials and labor for each home weatherized.

To Apply

Eligible applicants are low income individuals, and priority is given to the elderly, handicapped and families with children. Contact your local Community Action Agency for more information and to apply.

Community Action Resource & Development

522 W. Will Rogers Blvd., Suite 100

Claremore, OK 74018

(918) 341-5000

Serving Counties:

Mayes, Nowata, Rogers, Tulsa, Wagoner,
Washington.

United Community Action Program

501 6th Street

Pawnee, Oklahoma 74058

(918) 762-3041

Serving Counties:

Creek, Kay, Noble, Osage Pawnee, Tulsa.



**Have questions or need more information?
Call Tulsa Area Agency on Aging at
918-596-7688 or SENIOR INFO-LINE AT 1-800-211-2116**

GET THE FACTS ABOUT MRSA “MERSA”

Community acquired MRSA (methicillin resistant staph aureus) has become a media “go to” topic lately. Unfortunately there is a great deal of misinformation about this increasingly more common bacterium. Though it is clear that in the community setting, the incidence of CA-MRSA is increasing, the reality is, MRSA has been increasing in prevalence over the past 5-10 years. Many of these infections begin after contact in the healthcare setting (nursing homes, hospitals, family contacts). It is not increasing solely in our school systems. MRSA is also being identified in many different non-medical settings, such as the workplace, gyms, and any place that large numbers of people congregate.



There is much speculation regarding the increasing visibility of MRSA in the community. Some are due to excessive use of broad spectrum antibiotics in our foods as well as the medical setting. Bacteria and viruses have a built in ability to develop resistance to antibiotics if they are exposed long enough and frequently enough.

One common misconception is that these bacteria (MRSA) are resistant to all antibiotics. This is not the case. There are several oral and iv antibiotics that work well against this bacteria.



The most effective treatment, as always, is prevention. This means frequent hand washing. Soap and water works as well as the alcohol based lotions. Wiping down gym equipment with a sanitizer before and after use is also helpful. Once a person has been infected by MRSA, there are several things the doctor can recommend to decrease the chance of spreading the infection to others. Talk to your physician about these measures.

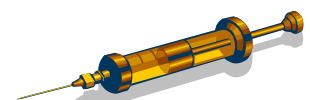
Early recognition is the next most important aspect of caring for MRSA and preventing the spread of the infection.

In the community setting, skin infections such as a boil, abscess, or spider bite are commonly associated with “staph” infections. The only way to determine if they are a “staph” infection or MRSA is a doctor’s diagnosis. Treatment for such infection may simply involve local drainage in the doctor’s office combined with care in the home. Occasionally oral or iv antibiotics are required. The most important aspect of treating such skin infections is timing. If a simple skin infection is worsening over 2-3 days rather than improving, the wound should be evaluated by your physician. The fact remains that most community acquired skin infections resolve without long-term implications.

Utica Park Clinic

FLU VACCINE

It’s not too late to receive a Flu Vaccination. In general, the best time to be vaccinated is October or November; however, you can still receive a vaccine in December or later. The Flu season can last as late as May. You can receive a vaccination at your doctor’s office, or your local Health Department. For more information, call the Health Department 582-9355.



Staying Mentally Alert

Lesley Smiley

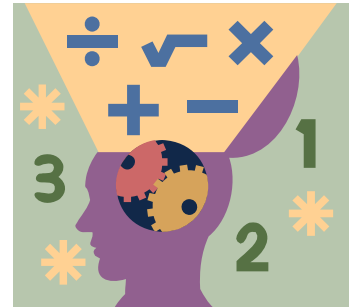
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Supervisor

In the not-so-distant past, entering the golden years meant a sure decline in memory. The loss of mental abilities was seen as a normal part of aging. Today, more and more research is pointing out that there are many proactive ways of staying mentally sharp well into the golden years.

One of the best ways to maintaining mental alertness is to keep the brain active every day. Keeping up with current events, working crossword and other puzzles, learning and memorizing new information are all excellent ways to exercise the brain.

Other techniques to keeping the mind strong include:

1. Attend lectures and plays.
2. Physical exercise.
3. Teaching someone something
4. Enroll in courses at adult education centers or other community groups.
5. Stay curious and involved—commit to lifelong learning.
6. Play games, especially word games, such as Scrabble.
7. Listen to classical music.



23rd Annual Oklahoma Minority Aging Conference to Convene in Oklahoma City

Allecia Ratliff

The Oklahoma Task Force on Minority Aging (OTFMA) will present a two and a half day Minority Aging Conference at the, Clarion Meridian Hotel, 737 S. Meridian, Oklahoma City.

This year's Conference theme is "Mind over Matter... *What Matters in Aging.*" Its objectives are: to examine mental health in aging from a cultural perspective, increase interest of mental wellness in older adults, and promote understanding of substance abuse and other mental health challenges.

This conference is designed to reach older persons, professionals, educators, caregivers, service providers, students, advocates and all other interested individuals in aging and aging services

The keynote speakers are Lily Lui and Dr. Anderson. There will be an intensive on Healthy Brain Strategies by Ruth Drew Program Director for the Alzheimer's Association.

For registration and other conference information, please call 1-800-375-8255, ext 130, or visit www.otfma.org. Full conference registration cost is \$75 for those that register by 3/01/08 and \$90 after 3/1/08. One-day registration is \$55.

Tulsa Area Agency on Aging works to create a positive impact on the quality of life of seniors in Creek, Osage, and Tulsa Counties by planning and funding supportive services, educating the public to the needs of the elderly, networking with public and private service providers, and advocacy. It is operated by the City of Tulsa through a grant from DHS, Aging Services Division, Special Unit on Aging.

This newsletter is published bi-monthly. Call for a free subscription. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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Tulsa Area Agency on Aging

(918) 596-7688

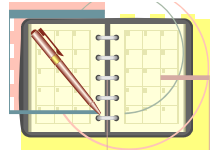
(800) 211-2116

111 South Greenwood

Tulsa Oklahoma 74120-1820

taaa@cityoftulsa.org

SENIOR CALENDAR



Jan. 1 - New Years

Jan. 7 - TCCA Executive Committee Mtg. 8:30am

Jan. 15 - Alzheimer's *"Step-By-Step: The Journey With Alzheimer's"*

To register, call 918-481-7741

Jan. 16 - TCCA Meeting 10:00am

Jan 21 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Jan 24 - Alzheimer's Caregiver Essential Series - *"Is it Alzheimer's or Normal Aging?"* To register, call 918-481-7741

Feb. 11 - TCCA Executive Committee Mtg. 8:30am

Feb. 14 - Valentine's Day

Feb 15 - National Women's Heart Day

Feb. 20 - TCCA Meeting 10:00am

Feb. 28 - Alzheimer's Caregiver Essential Series - *"Stress Relief for Body, Mind and Spirit"* To register, call 918-481-7741

Tulsa Area Agency on Aging
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Tulsa, OK 74120-1820

