

COMING OF AGE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Director's Update</i>	2
<i>Ombudsman's Corner</i>	3
<i>Medical Fraud and Identity Theft</i>	4
<i>Medicare Counseling Training Session</i>	5
<i>Interesting Announcements</i>	6
<i>Introducing New Planner I</i>	7
<i>Senior Calendar</i>	8

Thoughts to Ponder

Contentment does not depend on circumstances, but on hope! There can be contentment in walking a snowy trail with a cold winter wind blowing if there is a warm fire and hot cocoa at the end of it!



Tri-County Council on Aging

Tri-County Council on Aging would like to welcome our new members: Natalie Morey, Vicki L. Watkins, Doris Williams and Gwendolyn Wright. We also welcome the members who have volunteered for another three year term with the Council: Daisy Burrus, Margaret Carson, Albert Collier, Jan Davis, Bob Dick, Brenda Marquez, Samuel Parker, Martha Rains, Paul Shireman, Lois Williams, Tommie Williams, Geraldine Wilson and Rev. Richard Ziglar. Chairman Bob Dick and Vice-Chairwoman Stacie Ware will continue to serve in their elected positions this year.

During our November Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon Ken Mills and his intrepid group of volunteers were honored for volunteering to cook at the Silver-Haired Legislatures Pancake Breakfast last August. His group included TCCA members Ronald Harnden and Albert Collier, as well as Arlene Mills, George Hensley, Jack Martin, and Patrick Martin. Asbury Methodist Church was honored for hosting our Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group. Also, the Presbyterian Church Synod of Sun Youth Volunteers was honored for doing house repairs and yard work for our senior citizens.

The Tri-County Council on Aging will continue to meet at 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month at the Greenwood Cultural Center, 322 N. Greenwood. All TCCA meetings are open to the public. We are looking forward to an exciting and productive New Year.



The New Year will bring opportunities and challenges for the Tulsa Area Agency on Aging. We are seeing more people with a higher need for assistance. There is confusion over the new health care bill. Social Security will not be increased in 2010. State funding to provide support to seniors has been reduced by 54.4% since September and things do not look any better for FY2011. This is far more than the 5-10% reductions we hear about in the media. And being a part of the City of Tulsa has also brought its funding challenges. However, it is a New Year and we will not dwell on the negative!



On the positive side, the Osage County Commissioners voted to make up the shortfall out of the county budget. In Creek County, the communities of Sapulpa, Bristow, Kellyville, Oilton, Mannford, and Drumright have all stepped forward to ensure the continuation of home-delivered meals. In Tulsa County, the City of Sand Springs is paying for home-delivered meals. Meals on Wheels also agreed to move 122 home-bound seniors into their program. We appreciate their commitment to their seniors and hope that OKDHS and the State Legislature will show similar commitment to seniors in next year's budget.

TAAA is looking forward in 2010 to pursuing a number of new partnerships in the development of the Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Medicare Counseling with the Oklahoma Insurance Department, Masonic Foundation projects, and the Alzheimer's Association. As a result of ARRA (federal stimulus) funding, we may be the recipients of several potential grants including an application by the University of Oklahoma to the National Institute of Health for telecommunication equipment and training and an Aging Services Division application for a Chronic Disease Self-Management (CDSMP) training funds.

Our future funding may be murky, but one thing is certain...TAAA will continue to do everything in our power to serve our senior citizens with the greatest need, and we will pursue mutually beneficial partnerships to stretch our funding options to the limit!



'Twas the Month After Christmas...

'Twas the month after Christmas
And all through the house
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste
At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.
When I got on the scales
There arose such a number!
Then I walked to the kitchen
(less a walk than a lumber).
I remembered the marvelous meals I'd prepared;
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared.
The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the
cheese,
And the way I'd never said, "No thank you,
please".
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt-
I said to myself, as only I can
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So— away with the last of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and
chip
Every last bit of food that I like must be
banished
'Till all the additional ounces have vanished.
I won't have a cookie— not even a lick.
I'll want to chew only on a long celery stick.
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or
pie,
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.
I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore-
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot,
"Happy New Year to all and to all a good
diet!"

—Anonymous, but contributed by Lesley
Smiley

Ombudsman Volunteer Training Date

For anyone interested in becoming a volunteer, our next volunteer training dates are Thursday, February 18 and Thursday, February 25, 2010 from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. To register for training you may call: Loretta Bailey at 596-7657; Sarah Strecker at 596-7210; or Lesley Smiley at 596-7685.



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 (in-state only)



Medical Fraud and Identity Theft Alert!!

What is Medical Identity Theft?

Medical identity theft occurs when someone steals your personal information (like your name, Social Security number, or Medicare number) to obtain medical care, buy drugs, or submit fake billings to Medicare in your name. Medical Identity theft can disrupt your life, damage your credit rating, and waste taxpayer dollars. The damage can be life-threatening to you if wrong information ends up in your personal medical records.

Deter, Detect, Defend!!

Deter: Protect your personal information.

Guard your Medicare and Social Security numbers carefully. Treat them like you would treat your credit cards.

Be suspicious of anyone who offers you free medical equipment or services and then requests your Medicare number. If it's free, they don't need your number.

Do not let anyone borrow or pay to use your Medicare ID card or your identity. It's illegal and it's not worth it.

If your Medicare card is lost or stolen, report it right away. Call Social Security at 1-800-722-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) for a replacement.

Detect: Watch out for these common fraud schemes!

Just walk away if someone approaches you in parking lots, shopping centers, or other public areas and offers you free services, groceries, transportation, or other items in exchange for your Medicare number

Simply hang up the phone if someone calls you claiming to be conducting a health survey and asks for your Medicare number

Don't give information to telephone marketers who pretend to be from Medicare or Social Security and ask for payment over the phone or Internet. They may want to steal your money.

Defend: Check all your medical bills, Medicare summary notices, explanation of benefits and credit reports

Were you charged for any medical services or equipment that you didn't get?

Do the dates of services and charges look unfamiliar?

Were you billed for the same thing twice?





Continued from previous page

Does your credit report show any unpaid bills for medical services or equipment you didn't receive?

Have you received any collection notices for medical services or equipment you didn't receive?

Report Medicare Fraud and Medical Identity Theft!

If you spot unusual or questionable charges, contact your health care provider. It may just be a mistake.

If your complaint is not resolved by your provider, report the questionable charges to Medicare.

Phone: 1-800-633-4227; TTY: 1-877-486-2048

Online: medicare.gov

To get help reading your Medicare Summary Notices go to www.medicare.gov/basics/SummaryNotice.asp
Get a free credit report each year by calling 1-877-322-8228

If you suspect Medicare fraud, contact the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

Phone: 1-800-477-8477; FAX: 1-800-223-8164

TTY: 1-800-377-4950

Email: HHSTips@oig.hhs.gov, Online: OIG.HHS.gov/fraud/hotline.

If you think someone is misusing your personal information, contact the Federal Trade Commission.

Phone: 1-877-438-4338; TTY 1-866-653-4261

Online: FTC.gov/idtheft

*Information obtained from the
Office of Inspector General*

Training Session for Medicare Counseling

Interested in helping people in your community with the ins and outs of Medicare? We will be co-sponsoring a certification workshop on Thursday, January 28th for Senior Health Insurance Program volunteer counselors. SHIP Counselors will assist with questions on Medicare, Medicare supplements, Medicaid, employer benefit plans, managed care plans, long-term care, help pay for prescriptions and more! If you are interested in this workshop, please contact us at 596-7688.



INTERESTING ANNOUNCEMENTS

State Conference on Aging: The Conference will begin on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 with Senior Day. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. There is no registration fee for Seniors on Senior Day and there will be a free lunch as well. There will be speakers and presentations in the morning and afternoon. Wednesday and Thursday, May 19 & 20th, will be primarily for professionals. There will be speakers and presentations geared toward the professional. There is a registration fee for the professional days, which also covers the lunches for both days. For the first time the event will be held in Tulsa at the Marriott Southern Hills at 71st and Lewis. There is ample parking at the hotel and rooms are available for those who would like to spend the night.

Poetry & Photography Contest: OKDHS Aging Services Division is having a State Poetry Contest for Seniors 60 and older. This popular contest is in conjunction with May being the Older Americans Month and the Winners will be recognized on Senior Day at the State Conference on Aging on May 18th. Poems can be submitted by e-mail to: AgingServicesPoetry-Contest@OKDHS.org. Submissions can also be mailed to OKDHS Aging Services Division, Attention Paula Cockrell, 2401 N.W. 23rd, St., Suite 40, Oklahoma City, OK 73107. The deadline for Poetry entries is January 31.

The photography contest is open to adults age 60 and older and children in grades kindergarten through 12th. Photos from adults must fall into one of the following categories: nature, portraits, miscellaneous, or an interpretation of aging. Student photos must be an interpretation of aging. All entrees in the interpretation of aging category must be accompanied by a 30-word description of how the photo relates to aging. Photography entries must be matted on black or white 2-inch mat board. Photographs cannot be emailed but must be mailed to the address listed for the Poetry Contest above and must be received by March 13th. Winners for both contests will be notified by May 1st in the hope that they can attend group's May 18th Award Ceremony at the Conference.

Stand UP for Seniors: This event's mission is To empower the aging network to advocate for Senior's needs and to bring awareness to the pressing economic issues facing the elderly. It will be held in Oklahoma City on Tuesday, January 12th at the Metro-Tech Conference Center, 1900 Springlake Drive from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Anyone who might need transportation please call TAAA at 596-7688.

City-wide Free Dental Clinic, February 5-6, at the Tulsa Convention Center —This event will provide free tooth extractions, fillings and cleanings to people who otherwise cannot afford them. This event is sponsored by the Oklahoma Dental Association, the other major donors are Delta Dental Charitable Foundation, Pepsi-Cola, Oklahoma State Department of Health, OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine, Quik-Trip, El Rancho Grande, Rib Crib Barbecue, Mazzio's, McDonalds, Bama Pie, Cascia Hall, OU's College of Medicine, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Unit and the First Baptist Church of Tulsa.

Information: If you need any more information about any of these announcements please call the Tulsa Area Agency on Aging at 918-596-7688.



Tulsa Area Agency Introduces new Planner

Tulsa Area Agency on Aging is happy to introduce our new Planner, Rhené Ritter!

Rhené came to work for the City of Tulsa 4 years ago gaining experience in accounting and administration. From the moment she discovered the Tulsa Area Agency on Aging she has aspired to work there.

Rhené was born in Tulsa, and then moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico for 5 years. As a teenager she moved back to Tulsa where she graduated from Union High school and is now raising a family of her own. She has been married 18 years and is raising two teenage boys. Of course, we cannot leave out her two dogs, Molly- a Labrador and Buddy- a Coonhound. In her spare time she enjoys going to concerts, playing on the computer and watching the races.



At age 35 she realized life was too short not to do something she was passionate about and went back to college in hopes of working with the elderly. She now holds an associates degree in Sociology, specializing in Gerontology and is continuing her education at OSU-Tulsa. Rhené says, “I have always had empathy for the elderly and want to give back to those generations that have given so much to society today.” She fondly remembers the times she shared with her own grandparents, which gives her a greater sense of appreciation for seniors.

The Tulsa Area Agency on Aging is delighted to have Rhené with us and knows she will be a great contribution to our efforts to help the Senior Citizens in this area.



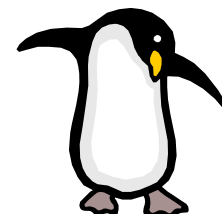
~PENGUIN FUN~

Question: Why don't you see penguins in Great Britain?

Answer: Because they are afraid of Wales!

Question: What song do penguins sing for their birthdays?

Answer: F'r eeze a jolly good fellow!



A man drives up to the gas station to fill up with gas, while he's there the clerk notices there are two penguins in the back seat. “Hey, where did you get the penguins”, he asked. The man replied, “I found them, but now I don't know what to do with them”. The clerk said, “Why don't you take them to the zoo?” The man said that was a great idea! The next day the man came by again and the clerk saw that the penguins were still in the back seat. He yelled at the man, “Hey, I thought you were going to take those penguins to the zoo”? “I did”, said the man, “we had a blast! Today I'm taking them to the beach!”



Tulsa Area Agency on Aging is dedicated to improving the quality of life by promoting **independence, dignity, and health** for senior citizens in Creek, Osage, and Tulsa counties through advocacy, education and support of community-based services.

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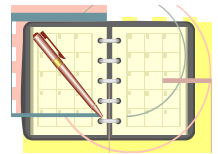
Tulsa Oklahoma 74103-3208

www.cityoftulsa.org/taaa

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SENIOR CALENDAR



January 1—New Year's Day

January 11—TCCA Executive Meeting at GCC, 9:00 am

January 12 — Stand UP for Seniors in OKC

January 16 — TCCA Meeting at Greenwood Cultural Center, 10 am

January 18—Martin Luther King Day—Holiday, Office Closed

January 31— Poetry Contest deadline

February 7— TCCA Executive Meeting at GCC, 9:00 am

February 14 — Valentine's Day

February 15 — Presidents' Day—Furlough Day, Office Closed

February 17 — TCCA Meeting at GCC, 10:00 am



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