



New Horizons

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Former artist in Bellevue found meaning of life through sculptures

By Ron Petersen

Sculptor Ira Olson was on a mission to make as much art as he could and make it meaningful for others to see around the world.

Olson never did it for the money or the fame, he just wanted millions of people to see his artwork.

"I enjoy doing it all," 71-year-old, Ira Olson said. "I am presented the rocks, and I was given the challenge to create nothing out of something. I made the art with my imagination."

The Texas native, always had a knack for art, but before he found his love for sculpting, he was involved with transportation in the Air Force.

"You name it, I can drive it," Olson said. "I chose the Air Force because all of the other military branches had to look up to us."

With his parents both being in the military, he followed in their footsteps as he travelled the world in the military. This helped him get familiar with the various cultures in Germany and Spain.

This all led him to Lead, South



COURTESY PHOTO

Dakota, where he'd spend his time with a hammer in his hand.

"It was a time that changed my life," Olson said. "Art was always

a hobby of mine, and I felt at peace when I did it."

Olson began his career as a sculptor, as he provided services like bronze casting, enlarging, mold making, restoration, welding, mounting, patination and model-making.

"It's my hobby and it relaxes me," he said. "I started to do subliminal carvings and that's where I learned to be a sculptor. I have been told that I'm a jack of all trades and a master of most."

As someone who is self-taught, he's done art pieces for people around the world. He has bronze pieces in Germany, rock carvings in England and other pieces of art in Africa and Japan. He would also submit art pieces at the Central States Fair in South Dakota, where he would win first place every time.

"I have done hundreds of pieces of art, and they are all around the world," Olson said.

A typical day of work on an art piece would take anywhere between five to eight hours a day, which

--Olson continued on page 8.

Taking charge of high blood pressure: Tips for older adults

By Theresa Coleman

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the United States with hypertension, or high blood pressure, as the leading cause of heart disease. For people living with blood pressure, managing this condition is a step in reducing your risk of developing heart disease. Diet plays a significant role in blood pressure levels. Managing your blood pressure often starts in an unexpected place: The grocery store. Let's take a closer look at how nutrition plays a key role.

GROCERY SHOPPING FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

While grocery shopping, you can also look for labels that say "low sodium" or "reduced sodium." By law, these statements must be true and follow certain criteria for the claim. If a food item says low sodium, it must be 140 mg or less per serving. If the label says reduced sodium, at

least 25% has been removed from the original product.

UNDERSTANDING THE LABEL LINGO

The supermarket is full of foods labeled reduced sodium or light in sodium. But don't assume that means they're low in sodium. It just means the products have less sodium than do the regular versions.

Another label to look for is the heart-check mark from the American Heart Association. This may be found on heart healthy foods in the grocery store. This shows foods that meet certain requirements for sodium, beneficial nutrients like vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein, or dietary fiber, and are limited in saturated or trans fats. An example of this checkmark can be found on a box of Cheerios because of the fiber content per serving.

When choosing foods to reduce sodium, fresh is best. But that does not mean frozen, boxed, or canned

--Blood Pressure continued on page 2.



Book clubs impact local communities

Book clubs are vital in inspiring deeper levels of learning for older adults in their reading of literature, and essential in developing self-motivated responsibility for deeper levels of conversation within communities. Learn more about local book clubs on **Page 16.**



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Crossing the midline in art at the Arlington Senior Center



NEW HORIZONS PHOTOS

In March, the Arlington Senior Center tried an interesting activity that included midline crossing and bilateral art. Midline crossing refers to the ability to reach across the body’s center with a hand, foot, or eye, while bilateral art involves using both hands simultaneously to create art, engaging both sides of the brain. This type of art is a therapeutic technique.



--Blood Pressure continued from page 2.
is completely off limits. Frozen vegetables, fruit, and meats are still low in sodium unless they come with a sauce or gravy or as a prepared meal, like a frozen dinner. But if those options are not available, rinsing the vegetables and heating them in plain water will help reduce the sodium. When it comes to snack foods, look for items like “lightly salted” or “unsalted” with nuts, crackers, or chips. You can pair it with fresh fruit or low sodium dip for a well-balanced snack.

LOWERING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE WITH DASH AND MEDITERRANEAN DIET

A couple of diets that have been created to help lower sodium intake to improve blood pressure. The first is called the DASH diet (dietary approaches to stop hypertension). This diet not only focuses on reducing sodium but also increasing nutrients that are also heart protective. This diet was named the “Best Diet for High Blood Pressure” in 2025 by the United States News and World Report.

The DASH diet focuses more on whole foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. It provides guidelines for how often certain foods should be eaten per day or week.

Another popular diet is the Mediterranean Diet. This is named the best diet of 2025 by the US News and World Report. This diet also focuses on whole food. The Mediterranean diet limits processed or high-fat meats, refined grains, sweets, and dairy.

While these diets are similar, there are differences that may sway one to prefer one diet over the next.

TIPS ON MAKING DIET CHANGES STICK

Small changes work best when making changes to your overall diet. If you are someone who relies heavily on prepackaged or convenience meals, it may take time

to adjust to a lower sodium meal pattern. There are ways to make changes slowly, which will give your taste buds time to adjust to these changes.

1. Hide your saltshaker- or salt at the end of cooking if needed. You may not need as much seasoning as you think.
2. Experiment with seasonings- garlic powder, onion powder, ginger, hot sauce, or vinegar can add a lot of flavor to your dish.
3. Start swapping out for reduced sodium options. If you find a low sodium stock to be bland, you can liven it up with some of those seasonings. You can find low sodium varieties of deli meat, chips, soups, etc.
4. Eat at home more often. You have control over seasonings at home, but you are at the mercy of the one preparing your food at a restaurant.

Once your taste buds adjust to a lower sodium diet, these changes will be much easier to stick to. When going to restaurants, look for meals with less processed foods (think sausage, bacon, ham).

Substitute French fries with a vegetable or side salad, choose baked or grilled proteins over fried or battered, and avoid gravies when you can.

If you are eating at a loved one’s house, let them know about your dietary preferences, or focus more on vegetables and have smaller portions of higher sodium foods. If you attend a potluck type of party, bring something like a vegetable tray or a lower sodium recipe so that there will be something that will fit into a low sodium meal.

Regularly monitoring your blood pressure at home and during checkups is the best way to track changes and understand their effects on your health.

A Word from ArchWell Health: Wherever you are on the memory loss journey, you are not alone. The compassionate team at ArchWell Health is always ready to assist caregivers and older adults with their primary care needs.

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AI is a wonderful tool empowering efficiency

By Paula Crozier

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept—it is a daily tool that can empower people of all ages, including older adults, to streamline tasks, improve productivity, and enhance their quality of life. From managing health care appointments and personal finances to enhancing communication and learning new skills, AI offers a range of solutions that seniors can integrate into their personal and professional routines. Voice assistants like Alexa and Siri, smart home devices, and intuitive apps like Nest thermostats and outlets have made technology more accessible than ever before, even for those who may not have grown up with it.

In fact, we’ve been using AI for years—often without realizing it. Every time we receive personalized recommendations on Netflix, predictive text while typing a message, or fraud alerts from our bank, AI is working behind the scenes. Email spam filters, GPS navigation systems that reroute us in traffic, and voice-to-text functions on smartphones are all powered by artificial intelligence. Even in healthcare, AI has long supported diagnostic tools and imaging software. These everyday conveniences show that AI isn’t new—it’s simply becoming more visible and interactive in our lives.

One of the most significant advantages of AI is its ability to become more intuitive over time. Machine learning enables AI programs to recognize patterns and preferences based on our behavior, which allows for increasingly relevant recommendations. For instance, a calendar assistant can begin to predict optimal meeting times or suggest routine reminders for medications and social engagements. Similarly, professional tools like ChatGPT or Grammarly can assist us with writing, customer service responses, and creative projects by learning our preferred tone, writing style or preferences.

Recent studies show a growing adoption of AI among older adults, especially those interested in remaining professionally active or managing complex personal tasks. According to a 2023 Pew Research Center study, about 42% of Americans aged 60 and older use AI-powered devices in their homes, citing convenience and increased

independence as key benefits. Moreover, AI tools in telehealth and financial planning have become essential for many seniors, as they plan daily and life management tasks.

For those just beginning to explore AI for personal and health management, several user-friendly platforms provide a strong starting point. Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa are great for managing calendars, reminders, and smart home functions. MyFitnessPal, the Health app on iPhone and Fitbit use AI to track health metrics, diet, and activity levels, while Youper and Wysa offer AI-powered mental wellness support through chat-based interactions. For health monitoring, apps like CarePredict and Medisafe can assist with medication management and health tracking. These platforms are not only intuitive but also customizable, making them ideal for older users seeking tools that adapt to their lifestyles. These are many examples of various platforms that seniors may research to provide options for AI solutions.

However, AI is not without its drawbacks. Concerns around privacy, data security, and the potential loss of human connection have made some users hesitant. Additionally, the digital learning curve can pose a challenge for less tech-savvy individuals. Research from AARP has pointed out the need for more user-friendly AI interfaces and targeted education to ensure that older populations can safely and confidently navigate these technologies. Addressing these issues is crucial for inclusive and equitable AI adoption.

AI has tremendous potential to create efficiency in our lives, whether we are managing households, caregiving responsibilities, or small businesses. With its growing adaptability and intuitive design, AI can help us to maintain independence, enhance productivity, and stay socially and professionally engaged.

Paula is the Director of Marketing and Development at Florence Home Healthcare Center, Royale Oaks Assisted Living and House of Hope Assisted Living and Memory Care. In her spare time, Paula is rediscovering all the things she did as a child that she can still do like painting, coloring, hiking and bike riding.

Programs changing this month at AARP NE Information Center

By Tony Harris
AARP NE Information Center



Omaha is home to a unique nonprofit called HELP, which stands for Health Equipment & Long-Term Planning. HELP seeks to improve the quality of life and independence for seniors, adults, and teens and serves more than 7,000 people in eastern Nebraska and southwest Iowa. Their work involves renovating medical equipment to make

it available to those in need, helping them to age in place and remain in their homes. On May 21 at 1:30 p.m., anyone is invited to attend the AARP Nebraska Information Center’s monthly program, where Kurt Bush, the Executive Director of HELP, will talk more about the organization’s mission and ways you can support their work. Located at 1941 S 42nd

St. in suite 220, the Information Center is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. If you are interested in becoming more involved, stop by the Information Center to learn more about the many opportunities to get involved in the community by becoming an AARP Nebraska volunteer. For more information call the Information Center at 402-916-9309.

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New Horizons

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The tornado of 1975 – thirty minutes of sheer destruction and devastation

By Andy Bradley
Contributing Writer

On the late sultry afternoon of May 6, 1975, James Salkeld was driving home with his son after the two of them finished their day shift at the former Western Electric assembly plant in Millard. Traveling east on I-80, Salkeld's pickup approached 72nd Street. It was just before the late afternoon rush hour, yet the interstate was eerily deserted. "The closest car was a half mile behind me," Salkeld said, "and several cars a quarter mile ahead of me."

Turns out Omaha police had closed the intersection of I-80 and 72nd Street at 4:40 in anticipation of catastrophic weather approaching from the southwest.

What Salkeld observed next took him back nearly 20 years to his senior year in high school in Kincaid, Kansas, a hamlet of 103 persons southwest of Kansas City. That late spring afternoon, a tornado snaked through the countryside about a mile or two from



Bob Dunn was a photographer for Winner's Circle Custom Photography and took pictures at some of Nebraska horse tracks for many years. This Photo showing the near miss that day is from the Photo Archive of the Durham Museum.

school, splintering barns, lifting farm homes from their moorings and tossing farm implements into the air like Tonka toys.

Salkeld saw it all, like a scene right out of the Wizard of Oz. "I saw this yellow thing spinning around and thought, that's my buddy's

combine. I watched it go up in the air and come down beside his house," which was then destroyed by the twister.

Now, what Salkeld observed two decades later looked eerily familiar. A dark funnel cloud, spinning and towering directly overhead, his pickup the green monster's moving target, his passenger cab the bullseye.

Asked whether he was terrorized by the sight, "Not really," he answered. He figured it wasn't quite close enough to snare his pickup. After all, "I had seen the combine go flying in Kansas so I know what they are capable of."

So he drove "right under that sucker" on I-80 at 72nd street. "It went right over the top of us. It wasn't on the ground at that point." He then navigated the rest of the way home in east Omaha without incident.

of severe thunderstorm warnings. At 4:09, the first funnel cloud was spotted outside Springfield, tracking northeast, and tornado sirens were activated for Sarpy County. Twenty minutes later, Omaha sirens sounded as the tornado was spotted at Hwy. 370 and 132nd Street.

The first reports of property damage came at 4:35 near 96th and Q Streets area. Next, the Wentworth Apartments at 84th and Q Streets, then the largest apartment complex in the area, sustained major damage. The monster storm, the likes of which Omahans hadn't faced in generations, tracked north and east, damaging Ralston High School, near 90th and Q Streets, before shifting to a mostly northern direction just beyond I-80.

As reported above, The F4 tornado skipped over I-80 at 72nd Street, saving its fury for the Westgate neighborhood and Westgate school, in the vicinity of 72nd and Grover Streets. The 300-yard wide, 15-mile long path of destruction – nine miles in Omaha alone – continued tracking north along 72nd Street. In its way were a thousand homes and a hundred businesses, churches and schools, including El Matador (now named Fernando's) Restaurant, where a 23-year-old waitress was killed, the Nebraska Furniture Mart, even the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, headquartered at the time just north of Pacific on 72nd Street.

Further north, damage was reported to, among many others, the U.S. Post Office, Downtowner Motor Inn, Lewis and Clark Junior High School, First United Methodist Church, Temple Israel and Creighton Prep High School. The nearby Crossroads Mall was untouched. Another fatality was recorded at a gas station near 69th and Maple Streets before the cyclone mercifully weakened and dissipated at 4:58 near Benson Park.

In all, 30,000 people, about 10 percent of the city's population, lived, worked or went to school in the storm's path, causing \$150 million in damage (\$885 million in today's dollars).

In this pre-cell phone era, residents were desperate to learn the fate of family and friends. Gary Bothe, for example, was working at a computer lab in the administration building at UNO, listening intently to news and weather reports throughout the afternoon.

A co-worker asked Bothe if he had heard any reports about her neighborhood – just east of Creighton Prep. "There had been many reports of severe damage and complete destruction of homes in that area," Bothe recalled. "But I didn't tell her that she most likely didn't have a house."

Bothe then took an urgent call from his wife. A family friend's home in southwest Omaha had been hit. He dropped what he was doing and sprinted to his car with the intent to render aid. Only he encountered closed roads and debris-strewn streets. "Because the streets were blocked, I had to go aways to the west and come up from the south."

When he arrived, he discovered that the house had been picked up and moved into the backyard. "The front door was on the patio," Bothe recalled. "We're standing looking into the basement."

Amazingly, even though the home had been unmoored from its foundation, "the house was virtually intact. We were walking through it as though nothing had happened."

WITNESS TO HISTORY
A key figure that day providing critical and timely
--Tornado continued on page 5.



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COURTESY PHOTO

This photo from the Creighton Prep yearbook shows the extensive damage the school sustained.

--Tornado continued from page 4.

updates to the community was Gary Kerr, then the anchor for WOWT news. In a recent interview with New Horizons, Kerr recalled the day in considerable detail. Despite the damage and loss of life, Kerr feels Omaha lucked out that day for several reasons. The first was the fortunate timing of the event – schools had been dismissed and rush hour traffic had not begun. Kerr explained. “The tornado came though and absolutely destroyed Westgate Elementary School. The students had been let out of that school. You say to yourself, ‘what if that tornado had come though while those kids were in that school?’ ”

Another positive was the timing, urgency and multiple repetitions of warnings issued by the National Weather Service.

“The weather service did a fantastic job of warning people,” Kerr recalled. “The warnings began pretty early in the day.”

Two other near misses included the Ak-Sar-Ben grandstand, where 8,700 thoroughbred racing fans watched in disbelief as the twister passed just blocks west. “It just missed them. If it had hit that grandstand, think of what would have happened,” said Kerr. Same story at Bergan Mercy Hospital, which did suffer a direct hit, but all 425 patients who were sheltered in the hallways escaped injury. “There was enough warning that the staff managed to get everybody into the hallways,” Kerr said.

“Yes, three people were killed. Yes, about 140 people were injured. But I’m telling

you, it could have been dozens of people killed, many hundreds of people injured.”

Kerr, who had a 34-year career at WOWT before retiring in 1998, described the challenges of covering the tornado.

“There’s a big difference between then and now how we covered it,” Kerr said. “You have to remember that this was 1975. We didn’t have the live capability that we have today.”

Kerr described how reporters would use car phones to send in reports, while shooting film with their awkward handheld cameras. Film rolls were rushed back to the station. “Then you have to process it. You have to edit it. So there’s an hour or two between the time you can get the film shot and you can actually get it on the air,” Kerr said.

And of course, competition was fierce among the three major Omaha television stations to report the news first. “There is one thing in the news that you are always told . . . first, you want to be accurate, and that’s what we all tried to do. But being first, getting this footage on the air, was extremely important,” said Kerr.

He also recalled how long tornado damage, cleanup and recovery was covered in the news. “You know what sticks in my mind, I guess, is the coverage just went on forever. It was an everyday story for weeks, months. So many aspects to it.”

Another unforgettable memory – he was tagging along with a reporter covering the storm’s aftermath and “there was a guy sitting on the debris of what was his house with his head in his hands and he was just

crying.”

He also recalls how Omahans pulled together to comfort and aid those who had lost homes and possessions and to help one another out. He was inspired by how the city navigated a comeback and rebuilt block by block.

“People always come back,” Kerr said. “They always do.”

La Vista Senior Center

You’re invited to visit the La Vista Senior Center, located at 8116 Park View Blvd. The facility provides activity programs and meals Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call 402-331-3455 for general Community Center hours.

Meals are served weekdays at 11:30 a.m. Reservations are due by noon the business day prior to the date the participant wishes to attend and can be made by calling 402-331-3455.

A \$5 contribution is suggested for the meal if you are age 60 and older. If you are under age 60, then the meal cost is \$9.50.

In addition to meals being served daily, the La Vista Senior Center offers a variety of activities such as: Bingo, outings, cooking classes, movies with popcorn, arts and crafts, a variety of card games, quilting, tai chi, exercise classes, musical entertainment and various parties.

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Healing Ribbons lands their permanent home

Native American non-profit, Healing Ribbons, will celebrate the opening of their new home located at 5017 Leavenworth St., with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The location represents not just a spot to set up shop or house fabric, ribbons and sewing machines, but a permanent home to return to.

“For Native Americans returning home is coming back to a place, whether that is a land, a family, a culture or a community, that you are a part of and is a place that you have a special relationship with,” said Alex Lovrien, executive director.

Founded by Tami Buffalohead McGill and Rebecca Sullivan in 2022, Healing Ribbons is led entirely by Native American women and focuses on building relationships and deepening cultural connections among groups of intergenerational

Native American women.

“We believe there is power in gathering and our matriarchs and their families need a safe space to share, celebrate, heal and create,” said Kateri Hinman Petto, PharmD, board president.

At each session a meal is shared, and participants take part in Native American wellness practices, including talking circles and prayer.

“Our intention is to create a space for cultural enrichment, healing, learning and connecting with the threads that unite us all,” said Lovrien, adding that: “Native Americans have endured more than a century of hardship, trauma and grief through colonization, boarding schools and genocide, but survived and continue to pass down the rich traditions, values and wisdom that sustain our tribal nations.”

Encouraging adults to raise their voices

“Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence.” -Leonardo da Vinci. This statement gives me pause. Whose authority? Whose silence?

I believe da Vinci was thinking of the authority of whomever is deemed to be in charge — state, church, proprietors, or the moneyed class. Whoever it is, they are most in control when the rest of society is silent. It is easy to take charge and do whatever when followers follow without question.

As we age, some of us may tend to turn authority over the next generations. “I did my bit, now let them take over” or “I don’t want to rock the boat.” Others may feel we have less to lose, so we raise our voices as never before. “I don’t like this, and I will let you know.”

When issues arise that clearly are not in the best interest of our own welfare, we all may become more vocal. When Social Security, a life-line for most of us, is threatened it is not a time for silence. When veterans of Korea and Vietnam are losing their healthcare, it is not a time be quiet.

Perhaps we have not been politically active before but are now moved to raise our voices. The question is how do I, one per-

Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

son, make myself heard?

In a democracy we have the privilege and responsibility to influence our government. The first step is to educate ourselves on what is really happening by reading and hearing trustworthy news sources. Then our primary power comes from the vote. (Omaha votes May 13 for mayor and city council.) Once duly elected officials are in office, we let them know about our concerns through emails, calls, and letters. We affirm what we like and express disapproval regarding positions we oppose. Because the elected officials represent us, it behooves us to let them know what we are thinking.

In addition to these political acts, we enjoy the constitutional right of free speech. It is our right to write letters to the editor, use social media, put up signs or participate in non-violent demonstrations.

Another powerful way to exert influence is to engage in substantive conversations with family, friends, and acquaintances. Many of us back off and go silent

rather than risk unpleasant conversations with those close to us who may have different opinions. Rather than avoiding this opportunity to engage, we do better to really listen to whatever the other person is expressing, to seek common ground. Once we hear them, an appropriate response is “Thank you for sharing. I have another point of view of that.” Then proceed to explain.

As seniors, we have learned that silence is not always golden. We have an obligation to speak up for ourselves and for those we care about. We each must find a way to raise our voices regarding that which is important to us. Engaging in the political process, free speech, and meaningful conversations are essential ways of remaining influential members of society.

(Hemesath is the owner of Encore Coaching. She is dedicated to supporting people in their Third Chapter of Life and is available for presentations. Contact her at nanhemesath@gmail.com.)

How to be a waterwise gardener

By Melinda Myers

Too much or not enough water and never when your garden needs it. This is a common complaint of gardeners no matter where they live. Make a few changes in your plant selection and garden care to help manage water use while growing healthy plants.

All plants need sufficient moisture after planting and for several months to a year or two to develop a robust root system. Those labeled as drought tolerant are better able to tolerate periods of drought once established. Always water the area surrounding new plantings thoroughly when the top few inches of soil are crumbly and moist. Gradually reduce the frequency, and once the plants are established, you’ll need to water less often.

Moisture-loving plants are good choices for areas receiving sufficient and consistent moisture throughout the growing season to meet their needs. In locations where this is not the case, consider grouping moisture-loving plants together so you use less water and can concentrate watering efforts to just one or two locations in your landscape.

Fluctuating periods of excessive and insufficient rainfall add to the challenge. Many native plants, once established, tolerate periods of wet and dry soil and can be found on lists of rain garden plants suited to your area. Keep water in the garden, out of the storm sewers, and reduce the risk of flooding while improving your garden. Adding several inches of compost to the top 8 to 12 inches of soil increases the soil’s ability to absorb and retain water. It also improves drainage in heavy soils. Top dress existing gardens by spreading an inch of compost over the soil surface.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including Midwest Gardener’s Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda’s Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Tree World Plant Care for her expertise in writing this article. Her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Fremont Friendship Center

You're invited to visit the Fremont Friendship Center, 1730 W. 16th St. (Christensen Field). The facility is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

A meal is served weekdays @ 11:30 a.m. Reservations, which are due by noon the business day prior to the meal the participant wishes to enjoy, can be made by calling 402-727-2815. A \$4.25 contribution is suggested for the meal.

This month's activities will include:

- **May 1:** Presentation from Nye @ 10 a.m.
- **May 7:** Music with Billy Troy @ 10 a.m.
- **May 8:** Mobile Library @ 9:30 a.m.
- **May 8:** Big Give Day
- **May 14:** Music with The Links @ 10 a.m.
- **May 15:** Nutrition News @ 10 a.m.
- **May 21:** Music with Mark Irwin @ 10:30 a.m.
- **May 28:** Music with Julie Couch @ 10:30 a.m.
- **May 29:** Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing @ 10:30 a.m.

Craft class on Tuesday afternoons @ 1:30 p.m.

Tai Chi offered every Tuesday and Friday from 9:15-10 a.m.

If you can't stay for lunch with our friends and you currently participate in any activity at the center, you may now order a Grab-n-Go meal to take home for your lunch. Grab-n-Go meals must be reserved the day before by noon and the person ordering the lunch must come in to the center to pick it up at 11 a.m. The number of Grab-n-Go lunches are limited to a first come first serve basis. Suggested donation is \$4.25.

For meal reservations and more information, please call Laurie at 402-727-2815.

Fontenelle Forest

Go experience the thrill of watching the Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower at Neale Woods located at 14323 Edith Marie Ave. in Omaha.

Don't miss out on this annual sky beauty on May 6 from 9-11 p.m.

The event will begin with a brief evening hike on dirt-packed trails through the prairie and forest. Then as night falls, we will stargaze together and watch for shooting stars while learning about meteor showers and general astronomy from our seasoned volunteer, Bob Fuchs.

How is the Forest different after the sun goes down? How does the full moon affect nocturnal animals? Learn more during the Full Moon Hike.

This program will include an educational discussion of the nocturnal animals around the Forest and a brief talk into the lore of full moons. The guided hike will proceed after the discussion.

This will take place on May 8th from 8-10 p.m.

For more information, visit the Fontenelle Forest website at fontenelleforest.org.

Millard Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Millard Senior Center at Montclair, 2304 S. 135th Ave., this month for the following:

- **May 2:** Cinco de Mayo 11 a.m.
 - **May 7:** Board Meeting @ 10 a.m.
 - **May 12:** Bunco @ 12:30 p.m.
 - **May 14:** P.A.W.S (Puzzles and Words with Seniors working with Montclair Elementary kids). This is the last one until Fall @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **May 14:** Sewing Club meets to organize sewing projects for the Grain Train. They make sun dresses and shorts at home that are donated and distributed to several countries @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **May 19:** Book Club @ 1 p.m.
 - **May 26:** Center will be closed for Memorial Day
- Tai Chi on Mondays and Fridays @ 9:30 a.m.
Bingo every Tuesday and Friday @ 12 p.m.
Sportswear Fridays. Wear your favorite team attire every Friday.
Hand-N-Foot Wednesdays @ 8:30 a.m.
MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.
Chair Volleyball Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m.
Dominoes Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.
For more information, please call 402-546-1270.



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This plan is not insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies.

May 2025 • New Horizons • Page 7

could take up to five months to complete. On his own, Olson would go out and find a rock, mold the rock and hammer the rock with great detail into what his vision was and would send it to his partner.

His partner, who did the metal work, would work on it and send it to back Olson to get his approval.

“My partner had to do it until I was satisfied with the work because I was quality control,” Olson said. “At the end, if I didn’t like it, I would take a black magic marker to the piece, and that meant he had to sandblast, refit, solder or weld, and fix it and bring it back to me. And I didn’t care because I wanted perfection.”

Despite working through four back surgeries during his lifetime, Olson continued to work on various pieces of art.

"I've done a lot of chiseling," he said. "There is a piece that took almost five months to make, which was a T-Rex. I used ceramic shelling with bronze casting for all of that, which were of bones from a T-Rex that I turned into bronze. I loved doing the dinosaur because the detail made it come alive. I like detail in every piece I work on."

One piece of Olson's in particular that has plenty of detail, and one he's particularly proud of, is a sculpture that was presented to the New York fire station in 2002.



COURTESY PHOTO

In 2002, Ira Olson created an 18-inch-high sculpture that depicts the head of a bald eagle, which was delivered to the fire department in New York. He's worked on hundreds of sculptures that can be seen around the world.

In March following the attacks on the Twin Towers in 2001, the fire department in New York was presented a statue made by Olson, which honored the fallen firefighters of New York City's World Trade Center terrorist attack.

The 18-inch-high sculp-

ture depicts the head of a bald eagle. Carved on a lower side is the emblem of the Fire Department of New York, and carved out of a heart-shaped hollow in the back of the eagle's head is the figure of a fully-equipped firefighter.

"That piece is one of my

favorite pieces of art I ever worked on," Olson said.

These days at the age of 71, Olson put down the hammer and is now working on a new project, writing a book.

“The book is called THHIM, Tiny Happy Humble Immortals,” he said. “The book is going to be about the stories behind every art piece I have done. It’s my imagination – each character has a different

story that they are involved in. I have a lot of short stories that I want to compile into one because I want my stories out there."

While most of his work is still viewed by people around the country and the world, Olson still looks back on the memories he has of working with a hammer and bringing his art to life.”

"I do miss it – I wish I could just do one more," Olson said.

**Come join us as a Senior Companion
and bring a smile to a fellow senior
in your community!**



**For information to become a
Senior Companion Volunteer,
call 402-444-6536.**

Camelot Friendship Center

You're invited to visit the Camelot Friendship Center, 9270 Cady Ave., for regular activities, which include Chair Yoga, card games, Tai Chi, Pinochle, 10 Point Pitch, and bingo. This month's events include:

- **May 9:** Annual May Tea – other programs are canceled this day
- **May 15:** Mark Irwin performs from Merrymakers @ 11:45 a.m.
- **May 15:** Jackpot Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
- **May 16:** Book Club @ 12 p.m.
- **May 21:** Craft Day – Making a Patriotic Gnome Jars @ 12:30 p.m.
- **May 26:** Center is closed for Memorial Day
- **May 29:** Team Trivia Challenge @ 12 p.m.
- **May 30:** Presentation “Jeremy Daffern with Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing” @ 11:45 a.m.

Every Monday – Card Game: Manipulation @ 10 a.m.
Every Monday – Pickleball @ 10 a.m.

Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday – Kings in the Corner @ 10 a.m.

Every Wednesday – Chair Volleyball @ 10 a.m.

Everyday – Card Games @ 10 a.m.

Grab N Go meals are available.
For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or barbara.white@cityofomaha.org.

Brookestone Village celebrates seven resident centenarians



NEW HORIZONS PHOTOS

Joanne Morrow (top left) will turn 102 on Sept. 11. She was one of seven centenarians honored by Brookestone Village, located just south of F Street on 144th. Mrs. Morrow said remaining active and doing things she enjoys, like dancing, is the key to achieving older age. What surprises her about living to 100? “I had no idea it would go so fast.”

In April, Brookestone Village recognized seven of their residents who are over the age of 100. The day was filled with joy, laughter and happiness for the centenarians.

Leora O’Neil (top right), age 104, was also able to celebrate with her family at the annual birthday party.

Eclectic Book Review Club

The Eclectic Book Review Club, founded in 1949, is announcing its Spring 2025 schedule of author appearances.

Each event includes readings and discussion by the noted book’s author.

New members are being accepted.

The monthly meetings, which include lunch and the author book review, are held at noon at The Field Club of Omaha, 3615 Woolworth.

To reserve a seat, call Jo Ann at (402) 571-5223.

Reservation deadline is the Friday morning prior to the Tuesday meeting.

The author for spring 2025 will be:

- May 20- Timothy Schaffert, a professor of creative writing and the author of numerous books will present his most recent title, The Titanic Survivors Book Club.

This tale focuses on the life-changing power of books, following the Titanic librarian whose survival upends the course of his life.

Respite Across the Lifespan

Life can bring on stress for many of us. Finding ways to relieve stress is important to our overall health and well-being.

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Bingocize: A program that combines exercise, health education, and the widely popular game of bingo



NEW HORIZONS PHOTOS

Bingocize is a health promotion program that combines bingo with exercise and health education. It's designed to help older adults improve their physical, cognitive, and social health. The Camelot Senior Center and Florence Senior Center is looking for more people to join in on the fun.





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SCAN THE CODE TO SIGN UP!

Lawmakers pass cryptocurrency fraud prevention legislation in Nebraska

Nebraska's cryptocurrency landscape has been evolving, and so have the risks associated with it. The Nebraska Legislature's proposed Controllable Electronic Record Fraud Prevention Act (Legislative Bill 609), introduced by State Senator Eliot Bostar and endorsed by AARP Nebraska, passed. This crucial legislation was designed to implement consumer protections from scams involving gift cards and cryptocurrency kiosks — also known as digital currency ATMs. Similar in appearance to a bank ATM, they allow people to conduct cryptocurrency transactions, such as sending money through a digital wallet. Once the money is gone, it's very hard to track and recoup. Until the passage of LB609, these kiosks have been largely unregulated at the state level compared to traditional financial institutions, lacking sufficient consumer fraud protections. Because of this, criminals have been using them to commit fraud and steal millions of dollars through highly sophisticated scams, putting older Nebras-

kans' hard-earned retirement savings at risk. In 2023 alone, the FBI received over 5,500 complaints involving cryptocurrency kiosks, with reported losses amounting to over \$189 million. Alarmingly, more than 65% of these losses were incurred by individuals aged 60 and above. Overall, the FBI reported \$5.6 billion in crypto-fraud losses in the same year. Nebraskans themselves reported 239 digital currency scam complaints in 2023, totaling approximately \$14.6 million in losses. The bill establishes requirements around licensing of state operators to ensure only vetted operators manage these kiosks; daily transaction limits to protect consumers from large-scale theft; fraud warning notices to increase awareness about potential scams; transaction receipts to provide traceability to assist law enforcement with criminal investigations; fee caps to prevent excessive charges; and that cryptocurrency operators issue refunds for transactions identified as fraudulent.

Adding security: Multi-Factor authentication

By Kelly C. Bourne

Traditionally online accounts and websites required that a user enter an account ID, aka username, and a password to log in. This was relatively convenient but had a significant downside. If someone learned your username and password, they could log in and take control of the account. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) adds an additional security layer beyond knowing the password. With MFA in place even if someone knows your account ID and password then the account is still safe.

People may think that the chances of someone learning their passwords are minimal, but that isn't always the case. There are numerous ways that someone else can obtain them. Some ways are:

- A data breach at a website can reveal the user-

names and passwords of all the site's users.

- Users can be tricked via social engineering into revealing their passwords.
- Malware (malicious software) known as a keystroke logger can be installed on a computer to capture all keyboard activity, including passwords.
- If a password that's reused for multiple websites or accounts becomes known, then all of the accounts using it are at risk.
- Passwords written on a Post-it and stuck to a keyboard or monitor provide little security.
- Passwords that can be easily guessed like "abcdefg", "123456", "password" and "qwerty" provide no security.
- Hackers have tools to try to 'crack' passwords by making tens or hundreds of thousands of attempts to guess them.

Multi-Factor Authentication is one of the best ways users can protect their accounts. MFA is a generic term.

If two different factors are required to protect an account, then it's known as two-factor authentication (2FA).

If three factors are used, then it's called three-factor authentication (3FA). The 'factor' referred to in MFA can be one of three forms:

- Something you know, for example a password, a PIN or the answer to a security question like "What elementary school did you attend?"
- Something you have, for example a cell phone, a security card or a security fob.
- Something you are, for example your fingerprints, your voice pattern, your retinal pattern or your facial features.

Even if you're not familiar with the terms you're almost certainly already using MFA. An extremely common MFA example is withdrawing cash from an ATM. You insert your card (something you have) into the machine and then enter your PIN (something you know) into a text field. This is an example of two-factor authentication (2FA).

Another example where

users frequently encounter MFA is on their email accounts, e.g. Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo! Mail, etc.

A typical scenario is to bring up the mail server's website in a browser and enter your email address (something you know) and password (something you know). A code, usually six digits, is sent to the smart phone (something you have) that's registered with that account.

Once the correct code is entered into the login screen you can access the email account.

An example of a 3FA implementation that I am familiar with worked like this:

- Users logged into the network from their company issued laptop by entering their ID and password (Factor 1 – something you know).
- A two-digit number was displayed on the laptop's login screen (Factor 2 – something you have).
- That two-digit code had to be entered into a screen that came up on their company issued smart phone (Factor 2 – something you have).
- If the correct code was entered on the phone, then the camera on the phone had to be positioned so it could capture the image of the user's face (Factor 3 – something you are).

Only if the responses to all three factors were correct would the user be given access to the corporate network.

Examples of situations when MFA is typically utilized include:

- Accessing an employer's network when working remotely.
- Logging into social media accounts like Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter.
- Logging into websites that contain health information.
- Logging into email providers like Gmail, Outlook, ProtonMail and Yahoo! Mail.
- Logging into financial related accounts like bank accounts or investment accounts.
- Logging into government websites like Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare and the Internal Revenue Service.
- Logging into online games like Fortnite, Grand Theft Auto, Call of Duty and Street Fighter.

MFA provides a significant improvement in security, but it isn't infallible. Some of MFA's weaknesses are described here:

- Some MFA setups allow users to choose whether codes should be sent to their smart phone or email account. If codes are sent to their email account and that account can be accessed by someone else, then MFA codes are compromised. Users should always choose to have codes sent to their smart phones.

• MFA bombing or MFA fatigue is a technique used to thwart MFA protection. Some MFA processes send a message to the user's smart phone and requires the user to click on an "Approved" option to get access to the account. A criminal who knows the account ID and password can repeatedly try to log into the account. Each attempt results in a text message being sent to the user's phone. The user may approve the request by accident or approve it to make the messages stop coming. In either event it grants access to the bad actor.

• If a user loses his phone or MFA fob, then MFA no longer provides any protection. Without the device the user won't be able to access her account.

• Bad actors can use social engineering to trick users and get around MFA. If they already know the password they can attempt to log into the account and call the user to obtain the MFA code that was sent to their phone.

• MFA takes a little more time and effort to log in an account. Some users aren't willing to put up with any inconvenience and never activate or eventually turn off MFA authentication. If MFA isn't enabled, then it can't provide any protection.

Some accounts require MFA. Other vendors or providers strongly recommend it be used, but don't require it. If you aren't currently using MFA to protect your accounts, then adding this additional layer of protection is a good idea. If should be set up for any account that involves money or confidential information.

Kelly's newest book, *Ransomware, Viruses, Social Engineering and Other Threats: Protecting Your Digital Assets* will be available from Mercury Learning and Information.




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Join the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging is looking for men and women age 21 and older to join its Long-term Care Ombudsman Program which is co-sponsored by the Nebraska State Ombudsman Program.


ENOA's Long-term Care Ombudsmen volunteer in local long-term care facilities and assisted living communities to protect the residents' rights, well-being, and quality of life.

Long-term Care Ombudsmen must complete 20 hours of initial classroom training and 18 hours of additional training a year.

For more information call 402-444-6536, and ask for Marsha Peters at Ext. 1039 or Sharon Greco at Ext. 1002



State of Nebraska
Department of Health and Human Services
Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Program



Flaherty Senior Consulting

Join Flaherty Senior Consulting for a series of Solutions Group gatherings that will address the questions and challenges caregivers face. Solutions Groups provide opportunities for caregivers to learn how to deal with various issues, obtain skills and knowledge, engage in discussions, and interact with others in similar circumstances.

Upcoming meeting dates and locations are:

- May 13, July 8, Sept. 9, Nov. 11
St. Vincent de Paul Church
14330 Eagle Run Dr.
- May 17, July 26, Sept. 27, Nov. 29
Faith Westwood
United Methodist Church
4814 Oaks Ln.
- June 5, Aug. 7, Oct. 2, Dec. 4
The Servite Center of Compassion
72nd St. and Ames Cr.
- June 18, Aug. 20, Oct. 15, Dec. 17
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
93rd and Dodge streets

The Solutions Groups are facilitated by Nancy Flaherty, MS, CDP, president of Flaherty Senior Consulting. She has extensive experience working with family caregivers and caregiver groups. For more information, email Nancy at flahertyconsulting@cox.net or call/text her at 402-312-9324.

Intercultural Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Intercultural Senior Center (ISC), 5545 Center St. The Intercultural Senior Center facility – open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – offers programs and activities Monday to Friday. The ISC offers a morning snack, and regular or vegetarian lunch. Come and exercise at the ISC. It's never too late to learn and have fun. Join their language classes, technology, jewelry and crafts, and field trip options. Lunch reservations are due by 9 a.m. A voluntary contribution is suggested for the meal. Monthly food pantries are available for adults ages 50 and older. For more information, please call 402-444-6529 or visit the ISC website at interculturalseniorcenter.org.

Elder Access Line

Legal Aid of Nebraska operates a free telephone access line for Nebraskans ages 60 and older. Information is offered to help the state's older men and women with questions on topics like bankruptcy, Homestead Exemptions, powers of attorney, Medicare, Medicaid, and Section 8 housing. The number for the Elder Access Line is 402-827-5656 in Omaha and 1-800-527-7249 statewide. This service is available to Nebraskans ages 60 and older regardless of income, race, or ethnicity. The Legal Aid of Nebraska hours of operation are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

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This Month's Sudoku Answers This Month's Crossword Answers

Avoid travel offers, a tricky refund that costs money

Cybercriminals are taking advantage of travelers and tourists by sending out fake emails. The emails appear to be from legitimate airlines, hotels, and other travel-related organizations. However, the emails are actually a clever trick that scammers use to steal your money and personal information. The email you receive could appear to be from any travel organization, and they usually offer a chance to win a prize or a travel package. Or the email may sound urgent, such as claiming that you need to resolve an issue with your Airbnb or hotel account. If you click the link in one of these emails, you will be taken to a fake website and instructed to enter your personal information or user credentials. Anything you enter on these fake websites is transmitted directly to the cybercriminals. You do not win a prize for following the instructions in the emails, but the cybercriminals do. They get your data. Follow these tips to avoid falling victim to travel scams: • Be skeptical of email offers that sound too good to be true. • Unsolicited emails that instruct you to take an urgent action should be treated very cautiously. Cybercriminals often try to create a sense of urgency to trick you into falling for their scams. Another scam goes, you receive an email that appears to be from Microsoft. The email says that you have purchased a subscription to one of Microsoft's products. It seems legitimate because it is sent from a Microsoft domain, has a genuine order number in the text, and even contains official logos. The email claims that you bought an expensive Microsoft subscription and gives a number to call for a refund if you didn't make the purchase. But this email and the support phone number aren't real. If you call the number, scammers posing as Microsoft support will likely ask you for your login and bank account information. You never actually paid for any Microsoft products, but if you call the fake phone number, you will pay the scammers. Follow these tips to avoid falling victim to a phishing scam: • If you have concerns about a purchase, always go directly to Microsoft's official website. • Always be cautious when you receive unexpected emails about account problems, security alerts, or purchases. These emails can be a setup for a phishing scam. For more information, visit KnowBe4.com.

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Book clubs bring communities together

By Ron Petersen

Book clubs are a great idea to gather with some like-minded friends to discuss literature over food and drinks.

Add to the social component that they're a great way to meet new people and exercise your brain.

The activity can happen at your local library and at The Bookworm.

"We love hosting book clubs," owner of The Bookworm, Beth Black said. "We have many people that meet here, and we are always looking for new ideas to bring people by."

There are many reasons to join a book club, which includes meeting new people and discussing a book for pleasure.



COURTESY PHOTO

Book clubs can help keep the minds of older adults flexible and engaged by encouraging problem-solving, critical thinking, and recall.

No matter how strict the book club may be, joining one offers a social opportunity.

By engaging in a club, you can strengthen already

existing relationships, or even make new friends.

The Bookworm in Omaha offers over a dozen book clubs that allows groups to discuss a book when they

have an opportunity to do so with others.

"We like people that come and go," Black said. "You don't have to have a commitment. You can just come and go as you please."

Book clubs can introduce you to new perspectives as well. The beauty of discussing literature is that people interpret everything differently based on their own personal experiences and preferences.

If you were to discuss a book with a friend or family member, the odds are that you'll probably agree on most points.

Discuss it with someone who has a wildly different background than you, and you might experience a revelation.

One book club at The Bookworm called, "As The Worm Turns," allows readers to bring up topics that cover multiple genres, and it doesn't have a theme at all.

"Group discussions generates interest in books that someone might not have thought of already," Black said.

On a different note, book clubs can also be great for expanding your reading genres, and they make it easier to explore and appreciate different literary styles as well. You might not be drawn to non-fiction, for example, but joining in led discussions will help you feel more engaged with topics you might not have sought out on your own.

There is a book club called the, "What Are You Reading?" club, which allows readers to learn about different genres and to see what might pique their interest in the future.

"It's when people come in and talk about what they have been reading," Black said. "The group is all about being able to discuss different themes in a noncommittal way."

Ultimately book clubs can help build a community, and they allow people to come together through literature.

To learn more about where to find a local book club, visit The Bookworm website or contact someone at the Omaha Public Library to find out more information about the book clubs they have to offer.



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Florence Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Florence Senior Center, 2920 Bondesson St.

At the Florence Senior Center, lunch is served at 11:30 am. A select menu is offered Monday thru Friday. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance. Please call by noon the day before for a meal reservation.

The center hosts activities such as Tai Chi, annual picnics/special events, bingo, cards, gym & game room access, special guest speakers and socials.

Arts and crafts will be held on the third Wednesday of each month. They also provide health and nutrition programs.

For more information, please call Colleen Metz @ 402-444-6333.