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# New Horizons

## Lemke, Omaha Magazine celebrates 40 years of people-driven journalism

By Ron Petersen

In today's world where people are searching for groundbreaking, accurate and reliable news, the Omaha Magazine has been the staple in the community for local journalism over the last 40 years.

Over the last four decades, readers from around the metro area have had the chance to get their hands on the Omaha Magazine, which have presented business people, philanthropists, artists, politicians and more, in a different light. The stories have been about showing who they are and not what they do.

"Everyone has a story – you get to learn about the people in the community, and what runs the community," Omaha Magazine publisher, Todd Lemke said. "It's addictive to tell a personal story."

Lemke, who originally went to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for business, found his way to the Journalism College where he found a passion for journalism, and advertising.

"I fell in love with journalism and the advertising side," Lemke said.

A few years later, Lemke bought his magazine, and with the help of his knowledge of business, his work



### From Lightbulb Sales to Magazine Tales

Todd Lemke Celebrates 30 Years in Publishing

COURTESY PHOTO

in journalism took off.

"In 1983, we came out with a

niche," Lemke said. "No one was working with the visitors who came to town, so we were in every hotel room. We had a lot of entertainment, shopping, attractions, and restaurants to capture the audience."

Then in 1989, Lemke bought the naming rights to the Omaha Magazine, merging the two magazines together.

While Lemke has seen journalism change over time, he has believed in the same representation at the Omaha Magazine, which is why he made the company motto, "It's About All of Us."

"The sign on the front of our building says it all, 'It's About All of Us,' because we go for the people stories," Lemke said. "Over time you have to adapt and it's about sticking to your identity. Our identity is always going to be our core products because it's the way the public is going to view us."

Fast-forward to 2023, Lemke has built a well-oiled machine as he produces 24 titles and has about 500 thousand subscribers across all platforms, along with publishing the Omaha Magazine.

"There's deadlines every week

--Lemke continued on page 8.



## Despite setback, Altvater lives in the present moment

Despite a minor setback last year, Ralph Altvater said life in Buccaneer Bay can't be beat. Altvater reflects on his life and career on **Page 16.**

## Going from harvesting local solutions to global challenges

By Brian Ayers  
Metropolitan Community College

Days before COVID-19 arrived in Omaha, a shopper could visit any grocery store without worrying about being able to find the items on their list. But in the beginning days of the global pandemic, items typically found in abundance were nowhere to be found, no matter the expected shelf life. Hoarding happened.

While still in the midst of supply chain issues that have disrupted many elements of daily life over the

past two-plus years, the pandemic continues to remind us that we live in a highly interconnected and interdependent world. The arrival of a 320-square-foot indoor container garden at the Metropolitan Community College satellite location at Yates Illuminates Community Center represents lessons learned from the pandemic, community solutions for a warming planet and innovative methodology to achieve food self-sufficiency.

The LED-powered "Freight Farm" is a revolutionary vertical

crop-growing system that can produce more than two acres of food over the course of a year in an indoor, climate-controlled setting. Positioned as it is in the courtyard, it is truly the "centerpiece" of the Yates Illuminates, a collaborative nonprofit with a focus on education.

It is the first Freight Farm in Omaha, the second in Nebraska and the only one in the state with formalized academic programs attached to it. The hands-on curriculum offered at the Freight Farm is designed with the highly diverse

--MCC continued on page 9.

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# Exercise caution when the home buyers come a callin'

By Andy Bradley  
Contributing Writer

I received one in the mail the other day. A post-card. I've received this mailer – or similar ones – many times in recent years. Somebody wants to buy my home. For cash. As is. Unsolicited callers offer the same. As I drive through my neighborhood, yard signs at intersections promise, “will pay top dollar for your home – any shape and condition.”

Home buyers offering cash deals for fixer uppers as well as homes in any conditions – as is homes – are on the prowl everywhere. The appeal to the consumer is real. No worry about fixing your home's flaws; no worry about decluttering and staging for the buying public; no complicated legal real estate jargon. And quick cash for immediate needs – which appeals to individuals transitioning into retirement housing, long-term care or simply short of cash for pressing medical, family or other needs. They just want “out from under.” As one vendor advertises, “We buy houses for cash for any reason. No commissions, no agent fees, no costly repairs, no closing costs, no worries, and you don't even have to clean your way out.”

The so-called “as is” cash market is huge, although precise estimates of its size are difficult to determine. One source listed the industry's revenue at \$3.7 billion in 2021 and is expected to grow at a two percent clip between now and 2026.

Buyers may repair the house and flip it for a fast profit or hold it as a rental property; or they may enter a “contract assignment,” in which the deal itself is delivered to another party for a fee, a confusing practice known in the industry as, “wholesaling.”

The buyer will execute a legally binding contract with the property owner, with an agreed upon price for the transaction. Then, before closing, the buyer will attempt to offload the contract to another buyer – a third party – at a handsome markup.

But if a second buyer is not found, the whole deal may go south. According to information posted on the Nebraska Real Estate Commission website, “contracts often contain provisions allowing the wholesaler to

cancel the contract for any reason, which they will likely do if they cannot sell or assign the contract for a profit.”

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) identifies nearly 70 like businesses operating in the Omaha-Council Bluffs-Lincoln area, three dozen of which are registered with the BBB. Of those, 19 have A+ ratings, and a handful of others are rated “A.” Many of them are local franchises affiliated with large national “as is” or retail wholesaling businesses, such as We Buy Ugly Houses, Home Vestors and We Buy Houses.

According to an April 11 article in U.S. News and World Report, offers from home buyers “tend to be low, often 50-to-70 percent of market value, in exchange for a cash deal and cash payment.” Successful house flippers operate on a 70 percent rule, meaning “they will determine their maximum offer price as 70 percent of the estimated after-renovation value of the home, minus the cost of repairs,” according to U.S. News.

Consumers who engage with wholesalers should be aware that there is a price to be paid for the ease, convenience and potential speed of these cash deals. The cash that makes its way to your bank will typically be less – often much less – than the cash you would receive if going through a licensed real estate agent. In addition, consumers are often dealing with non-licensed entrepreneurs, which means that buyers navigate fewer legal and procedural barriers to conducting business, while sellers enjoy fewer consumer protections.

Industry regulations are few. Oklahoma and Pennsylvania recently passed modest constraints, as did Nebraska in 2022. Promoted by the Nebraska Real Estate Commission, LB 982 now requires wholesalers to either be licensed real estate agents or engage the services of one when offloading a property to a third party. In addition, the law mandates disclosure statements that advise sellers, among other things, that they may consult an attorney during their negotiations.

Administration of those disclosure statements may or may not

happen, and are not necessarily easy for consumers to comprehend, according to Omaha licensed real estate agent Lisa Ritter, who serves on the Nebraska Real Estate Commission.

Ritter, who was instrumental in shepherding the passage of LB 982, advises seniors who are considering doing business with as is buyers and wholesalers to seek advice from others, including several real estate agents, before signing. “Get two or three opinions from licensed real estate agents who don't buy houses for cash,” Ritter advised. Too often, when consumers restrict their conversation only to the home buyer, “you end up with a bad offer.” She added that the gap between market value and the offer on the table “is very, very significant.”

Ritter said licensed agents usually respond to inquiries in a hurry. “And they will do a lot of homework before even entering the house,” such as studying comparable home values. “It's worth taking that extra two hours to get advice, instead of leaving thousands on the table,” cautioned Ritter.

She gave the example of a senior who teetered on the verge of signing with a cash buyer until deciding to contact Ritter, who convinced her the home was worth plenty more than the \$150,000 being offered. After a market assessment, Ritter listed the home for \$210,000. It sold for \$222,000. So even after paying commissions, typically six percent, the seller in this case netted about \$55,000 more than what was being offered by the “as is” home buyer.

Consumers can find valuable market information online through sites such as Google, Zillow or the National Association of Realtors (Realtors.com). On Zillow, for example, potential sellers can research their own home, or neighboring houses, to identify a ballpark estimate of what their home is worth on the open market.

Some homeowners are reluctant to engage realtors because they assume agents will pressure them into making costly home repairs or upgrades, or expensive time-consuming staging and decluttering contractors.

--Home Buyers continued on page 3.



## We want to hear from you.

- Do you have questions about the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, its programs, or services?
- Do you have a comment about the agency and how it serves older adults in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass, and Washington counties?
- Do you have a story idea for the *New Horizons* newspaper, or would you like to receive a **FREE** copy each month?

Please send your questions, comments, and story ideas to:

**enoa.info@enoa.org**

We appreciate your interest in ENOA and the *New Horizons*.



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# Managing the long, dark days of winter

As daylight shortens and darkness takes a larger proportion of our time, I find myself wanting to skip the winter months and get right into spring. It is a good thing I do not have the power and means to make this happen. Winter has its own importance in giving life. Without the gifts of winter my life and all of nature would be diminished.

Light and darkness are complementary, the yin and yang of life. Light would have no meaning without darkness and vice-versa. The balance between the two is what creates wholeness. Nature demonstrates this for us. During the winter months, the trees, through their roots, bulk up on the soil's nutrients and on water so they will have enough energy to grow buds and leaves in the spring. Hibernation of some animals is another example of nature's way of enabling survival and wholeness. Bears reduce their body temperature, heart rate, breathing and consciousness to survive the harsh winter weather conditions and lack of food. Winter is their annual rest period.

We humans mimic this pattern of hibernation by spending more time indoors with furnaces and fireplaces blazing. Physical activity is reduced, especially in the Third Chapter, and we find more sedentary ways to spend our time.

To counter my initial negative emotional response

## Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

to the coming of winter, I reflect on the aspects of the season that I really enjoy. At this time of year, I pull out my jigsaw puzzle board and enjoy many challenging hours of assembling 1,000-piece pictures at a time. Another highlight of the winter months for me is Creighton basketball. While I no longer attend the games in person, I schedule time to get together with friends and watch the games on television. It is fun to have a group of friends watching a favorite team – win or lose.

Other high points of this time of year are the holidays festivities with all the gatherings of friends and families, the traditional foods, the festive symbols and traditional songs. I enjoy decorating the house and preparing meals. Christmas lights would not be the same delight if it were not for the darkness.

Beyond all these activities marking the winter, there is an even more profound shift in our awareness. It is the difference between sunlight and moonlight. Subconsciously or consciously the sun promotes wakefulness, action, energy, and productivity. Moonlight, on the other hand, softens the gaze and promotes rest, gentleness, deep listening

and peace. Some archetypes equate the masculine with sunlight and the feminine with moonlight. Of course, it is stereotypical to assume only men carry the masculine traits and women the feminine since both men and women carry these traits to varying degrees. There is a need for both if there is to be wholeness. The masculine or sunlight does would be little more than workaholics without reflection. The feminine or moonlight people would reflect and rest but very little would get done. I don't know any man or woman who is exclusively one the other. As in all of nature, life only works for us if we have a balance of the two sides.

With this awareness, I choose to spend the winter months rejuvenating my mind through reading and rejuvenating the spirit through reflection. This is in addition to my other favorite things related to the season. I may even make a point of gazing at the moon from time to time.

*(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.)*

### --Home Buyers continued from page 2.

Ritter said reputable agents are willing to take on and market a home in all states and stages of appearance, repair or disrepair. If asked, the realtor can still make recommendations for contractors to manage any desired repairs, cleaning or home staging, which can often help the consumer muster top dollar for their property.

Ultimately, it's up to the seller to determine how much time, money and effort they want to invest in the home readiness and selling process.

Ritter offered these three practical cautions for seniors considering doing business with cash buyers.

First, avoid uncomfortable pressure to sign now – a common but suspicious and unprofessional sales tactic that creates an unnecessary sense of urgency and immediacy. You may hear, "This deal won't be around tomorrow." Sure it will. Instead, give yourself a cooling down period to re-think the deal you are considering, avoiding costly and unnecessary seller's remorse.

Next, steer clear of cash buyers who caution you against speaking with others, especially real estate agents. Instead, welcome advice from all directions – family, financial advisors, confidants and others engaged in the real estate profession.

Finally, shun those who suggest the deal is dead – once and for all – the moment you declare your intention to list your home with an agent. Instead, be open to testing the waters of the real estate market, then return to a cash buyer if no satisfactory offers are received.

Before signing, always tap the resources of the Better Business Bureau. Is the vendor a member of the BBB, and how long have they been in business? What is their grade and what comments or complaints have been registered? And finally, if you believe you have fallen victim to deceitful real estate practices, file a complaint. You can do so with the Nebraska Real Estate Commission, the Better Business Bureau or the Nebraska Attorney General (protectthegoodlife.nebraska.gov).

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Join the  
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## New Horizons

New Horizons is the official publication of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging. The paper is distributed free to people over age 60 in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Washington, and Cass counties. Those living outside the five-county region may subscribe for \$5 annually. Address all correspondence to: Ron Petersen, Editor, 4780 S. 131st Street, Omaha, NE 68137-1822. Phone 402-444-6654. FAX 402-444-3076. E-mail: ron.petersen@enoa.org

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## Respite Across the Lifespan

Life can bring on stress for many of us. Finding ways to relieve stress are important to our overall health and well-being. Caregivers are not immune to this stress.

Please contact Respite Across the Lifespan at edben-nett@unmc.edu or 402-559-5732 to find out more about respite services and to locate resources in your area.

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\*This is Universal Design; not ADA Standards.



# What is a senior center, what do they offer and who is able to benefit?

By Ron Petersen

Senior centers go beyond being gathering places for the senior community. These facilities serve the purpose of providing seniors with everything they might need in one central location.

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging's (ENOA) senior centers, located throughout the five-county area, serve as resource centers in neighborhoods and rural communities.

"Many people know about the centers in the Omaha area, but there are more centers in the rural areas that are active and need more participants," Christina Ochoa, Nutrition Program Assistant said.

Senior centers are a vital part of every community,



as they serve older adults and help achieve a good quality of life for the community. Research in 2022, has shown that senior center participants have higher levels of health, social interaction, and overall life satisfaction compared to their peers who are not participants in a senior center.

Each center hosts a variety of recreation, social and health education activities and serves hot, nutritionally balanced meals.

Designed by a registered dietitian, the meals meet one-third of the recommended dietary allowance of nutrients. But there's more to the story than just a well-balanced meal.

At ENOA senior centers, friendship and fun are always included on the daily menu.

"Bingo, cards and crafts are just some of the great activities that are available at the centers," Ochoa said.

Another vital aspect of senior centers is the sense of community that it offers their participants. As you grow older, you may find it more difficult to find companions within your age category. Senior centers provide a place to gather and many different social activities that allow you to network with your local senior community.

Activities may include Tai Chi, bingo and dancing.

"For some of the seniors the only social interaction they have every day is at the centers. It provides a way for them to get out and make new friends." Ochoa said.

As someone ages and becomes a senior citizen, their family members often begin to worry about their well-being, daily social interaction, and quality of life. Senior centers offer a great deal

of relief in a world where adult children and family members cannot step away from their lives to tend to their senior parents or family members. Senior centers go beyond taking care of their participants, providing family members with the necessary information and guidance to help give their loved ones a happy and healthy life.

Gone are the days when senior centers are viewed as merely a meeting ground for the older population. Instead, senior centers are seen as a vital part of every community.

They offer the older adult population the information, resources, assistance, and social interaction needed to lead healthy, happy, and thriving lives.

"Senior Centers are not for 'old people,' they are for active older adults who want to get out more and enjoy life," Ochoa said.

ENOA Senior Centers are open to anybody age 60 and older, along with their spouses (regardless of age). A suggested contribution will be posted at the senior center.

Here is a complete list of the ENOA senior centers:

- Adams Park Senior Center
- Arlington Senior Center
- Bellevue Senior Community Center
- Bennington Senior Center
- Camelot Friendship Center
- Corrigan Senior Center
- Eagle Senior Center
- Elmwood Senior Center
- Florence Senior Center
- Fremont Friendship Senior Center
- Hooper Senior Center
- Immanuel Courtyard
- Intercultural Senior Center
- LaVista Senior Center
- Millard Montclair Senior Center
- NE Urban Indian Health Coalition
- North Bend Senior Center
- Plattsmouth Senior Center
- Seven Oaks Senior Center
- Snyder Senior Center



Available at Select Centers  
(Specific Start Date varies on location)

Reservations due by noon prior business day

Grab and Go Meals are to be taken from the Center and Enjoyed at Home

Participants can enjoy a meal at the center or a Grab and Go Meal, but cannot have both in the same day

See your Center Manager for more details!

Monday - Friday

Bellevue SR Community Center  
402-293-3041

Camelot Friendship Center  
402-444-3091

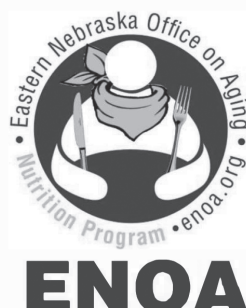
Corrigan Senior Center  
402-731-7210

Fremont Friendship Senior Center  
402-727-2815

Tues - Wed - Thurs  
Hooper Senior Center  
402-654-2537

Tuesday Only  
Eagle Senior Center  
402-332-7367

Wednesday Only  
Bennington 60+ Center  
402-238-2483



# Community Services Division Director, Christine Gillette retires after 44 years



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Christine Gillette, Community Services Division Director retired on October 27, after 44 years of outstanding and commendable service at the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging.

Gillette began her work with ENOA on July 2, 1979, as the full-time DOCS Supervisor, initially within the Volunteer Services Division which was later moved to the Community Services Division. She was promoted to the DOCS Coordinator on July 1, 1983.

Gillette became the Coordinator for Community Service's Recreation Department on July 1, 1984 and was then promoted to Administrative Assistant on March 10, 1986. She assumed additional duties of the Homemaker Services and supervisor of the Corrigan Senior Center.

Gillette was promoted to Community Services Division Director on July 1, 1996. She was also an integral part of the formation of the Intergenerational Orchestra in the spring of 1985 and has served as the Project Director since, in which she has coordinated trips to Dallas, Pittsburg, Kansas City, South Dakota, and a concert on the White House lawn, as well as over 300 concerts locally.

Gillette encouraged and motivated co-workers through her energy and creativity as a member of various inter-office committees. Her contribution as an intelligent, thoughtful, kind, detail-oriented, dedicated, and generous person is unparalleled and will be greatly missed by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging.

## 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 \$4.25 contribution is suggested for the meal if you are age 60 and older. If you are under age 60, then the meal cost is \$11.

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

Please visit our website at [cityoflavista.org/seniors](http://cityoflavista.org/seniors) for updated information or call 402-331-3455.

## 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 activities will include:

- **December 6:** Wear your favorite Christmas scarf
  - **December 7:** Mike McCracken with Merrymakers performing @ 11:45 a.m.
  - **December 13:** "Craft Day" Learn the art of Swedish Weaving @ 12:30 p.m.
  - **December 15:** Book Club @ 12:30 p.m.
  - **December 18:** Cookie Exchange @ noon
  - **December 20:** Camelot Christmas Party @ 11:30 a.m.
  - **December 25:** Camelot is closed
- Every Wednesday – Chair Volleyball @ 10 a.m.  
 Every Monday – Card Game: Manipulation @ 10 a.m.  
 Every Monday – Pickleball @ 10 a.m.  
 Grab N Go meals are available.  
 For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or [barbara.white@cityofomaha.org](mailto:barbara.white@cityofomaha.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.

# We need your support!

I would like to become a partner with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, and help fulfill your mission with older adults.

## ENOA

- \$30 = 7 meals or 1.5 hours of in-home homemaker services or 1 bath aide service for frail older adults.
- \$75 = 17 meals or 3.66 hours of in-home homemaker services or 3 bath aide services for frail older adults.
- \$150 = 35 meals or 7.3 hours of in-home homemaker services or 7 bath aide services for frail older adults.
- \$300 = 70 meals or 14.63 hours of in-home homemaker services or 14 bath aide services for frail older adults.
- Other amount (please designate) \_\_\_\_\_
- Please contact me. I would like to learn more about how to include the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging in my estate planning.

Traditional funding sources are making it more difficult for ENOA to fulfill its mission. Partnership opportunities are available to businesses and individuals wanting to help us. These opportunities include volunteering, memorials, honorariums, gift annuities, and other contributions.

These gifts are tax exempt.

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Please see the ad on page 3

## Thank you to the New Horizons Club members

\$50

Terrie Saunders

\$25

Cheryl Lambert  
Bonita Belitz

\$10

Rose Smith  
Carol Bosse

\$5

Kathleen Koons

### 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 p.m. – offers programs and activities from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

The ISC offers a light breakfast, lunches, crafts, health presentations, exercise, language classes, citizenship, technology, gardening and more. The ISC also offers mental health support, medical assistance programs, and a food pantry service that can be delivered to your home.

This month, the ISC will offer classes: Chinese Language & Culture on Fridays, and Sewing on Thursdays and Fridays at 12:30 p.m.

In the spirit of celebrating the holidays, Merrymaker's Ben Tomasello will perform on December 7th at 12:30 p.m., followed by the Christmas party on December 15th at noon. Note that ISC will be closed from December 25th to the 29th.

Lunch reservations are due by 9 a.m. A voluntary contribution is suggested for the meal. Please call 402-444-6529 for reservations.

Monthly food pantries are available for adults ages 50 and older.

ISC's SAVE bus (Sustenance Assistance Vitality Engagement), can bring case management services to your doorstep.

For more information, please call 402-444-6529 or visit the ISC website at [interculturalseniorcenter.org](http://interculturalseniorcenter.org).

### UNO Research Study

The Department of Gerontology at UNO is looking for older caregivers to an individual with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's disease, or Frontotemporal Dementia.

The study will include an online visit over zoom for approximately 90 minutes.

The experiment involves online questionnaires, interview, and computer tasks with a research assistant. Compensation for study participation is available. To be eligible for the study, you must be 50 years of age or older, currently an unpaid family caregiver to an individual with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's disease, or Frontotemporal dementia for 5 hours a week or more, and for at least 6 months. You also must have comprehension of written and spoken English, completed a minimum of two years of high school or higher and have normal or corrected to normal vision and hearing.

The exclusionary criteria includes neurological or psychiatric disease (e.g., stroke, depression), or drug or alcohol abuse, vision or hearing issues that are not corrected to normal, and they must have cognitive or motor difficulties.

If you are interested, please call Naomi Adjei at 402-554-5961 or email them at [ABELabUNO@gmail.com](mailto:ABELabUNO@gmail.com).

## Congressional action needed to support aging services nationwide

By 2030, older adults over the age of 65 will make up 20% of the nation's population; meaning there will be an increased demand for long-term care and aging in place services. However, the pandemic pushed the sector beyond its limits, with workforce shortages persisting and inflation causing more financial strain.

There's much work to be done in healthcare to prepare for the increasing elderly population.

In December, LeadingAge, a community of nonprofit providers of aging services and other mission-driven organizations, wrote a letter to the Biden administration to institute an Office on Aging Policy for a more focused approach to addressing the influx of older adults. While the department of Health and Human Services established the Administration for Community Living, that federal service focuses primarily on programs supported by the Older Americans Act and doesn't include nursing homes, home health, or hospice.

"It's very limited in its scope, and that's why we wrote this letter to the president," LeadingAge President and CEO Katie Smith Sloan told HealthLeaders.

Sloan explains there needs to be a central policy office that can look across the federal government at the many agencies related to aging policy and look for opportunities to connect the work each one is doing to improve the experience of aging.

Preparation for the influx of older adults should have begun years ago, and the workforce shortage and ways to pay for long-term care are two issues that must be addressed, she said.

### FILLING VACANCIES

"We simply don't have the people to fill the jobs in our sector. Whether those jobs are nursing assistant, physical therapist, nursing home administrator, nurses, hospice nurses, service coordinators, the folks aren't out there flocking to our field

or even learning about our field," Sloan said.

"It's a pipeline issue, a recruitment issue, a retention issue, [and] a training issue, and we have pushed for an all-of-government approach to solutions. Whether that be immigration, education, and training infrastructure, apprenticeship programs, and other ways to create meaningful jobs in our sector, so we can fill all those vacancies that currently exist."

To help with the workforce shortage, many healthcare organizations have made employee well-being and satisfaction a priority, which has helped with retention. Many health systems have begun establishing educational partnerships with colleges and community colleges in their communities to create a pipeline of potential talent.

"Lots of our members are partnering with their local community college, for example, helping to teach classes, provide placement for [student's] practicum, and that's kind of an all-of-the-above strategy— which we need—for workforce development," Sloan said.

### PAYING FOR LONG-TERM CARE

There have been arguments made for a public-private financing solution to pay for long-term care, and LeadingAge is hoping to garner some congressional interest as it investigates legislative solutions.

"A new Congress is coming in, and I haven't heard this as anyone's priority, but we're going to work hard on trying to find some champions in both the House and the Senate who are willing to take on these issues...so that we do have solutions before 2030," Sloan said.

There's no singular bill that could solve these issues, and there are various pieces that need to come together, but the need for congressional action is certain, she said.

*(Health Leaders Media provided this information).*

## Homoglyph, unicode phishing scams

You may be wondering what homoglyphs and Unicodes are.

Homoglyphs are letters or characters that look similar.

For example, the character "e" looks similar to the character "è".

Unicode is a unique code assigned to characters so that any platform or program can understand them.

For example, the Unicode for "e" is U+0065, and the Unicode for "è" is U+0117. Over the past several years, cybercriminals are taking advantage of homoglyphs and Unicodes in phishing emails to imitate legitimate organizations.

In a recent scam, cybercriminals send you an email that uses homoglyphs and Unicode to offer you a

fake promotion. The email includes a link to log in to receive your promotion.

For example, to make the email look more legitimate, cybercriminals could send the email using "Nètflix.com" as the sender.

The è symbol indicates a Unicode character that is not supported in your internet browser, but your browser will automatically omit these unsupported characters when displaying text. In this example, the sender's email address would display as "Nètflix.com."

If you don't notice the spoofed domain and enter your login credentials, cybercriminals can access your account and steal your sensitive information.

Follow the tips below to

stay safe from homoglyph and Unicode scams:

- Even if the sender's email address appears to be from a trusted domain, the email could be fake.

This technique can be used to impersonate any organization, brand, or even a person.

- When you receive an email, stop and look for red flags.

For example, watch out for text with odd spacing or characters that look strange.

- Never click a link in an email that you aren't expecting.

If the email claims that you need to log in to your account, log in to the organization's website directly to verify any offers or promotions.

## Fremont Friendship Center

**Y**ou're invited to visit the Fremont Friendship Center, 1730 W. 16<sup>th</sup> 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:

- **December 1:** Bake Sale @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 2:** Craft Show @ 9 a.m.
  - **December 5:** Presentation by Fremont Therapy and Wellness @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 6:** Valley Lakes Assisted Living to bring Coffee Cake! Followed by special music from Tim Javor-sky provided by Merry Maker's @ 9:15 a.m.
  - **December 7:** Presentation with Nye @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 12:** Christmas Sing-along with Jeanne @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 13:** Special Music with Ben Tomasello followed by December birthday party @ 10:30 a.m.
  - **December 20:** Nye brings their famous cinnamon rolls @ 9:15 a.m.
  - **December 20:** Special Music with THE LINKS @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 21:** Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest
  - **December 22-25:** Center is Closed
  - **December 27:** Special Music with Kim Eames @ 10:30 a.m.
  - **December 28:** Early Bird Bingo followed by The Omaha Dancing Grannies @ 9:45 a.m.
  - **December 29:** White Elephant Bingo @ 10:30 a.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.

## Corrigan Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Corrigan Senior Center, 3819 X St. this month for a variety of activities.

The Corrigan Senior Center is open weekdays from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Lunch is served at noon. A \$4.25 donation is suggested for the meal.

BINGOCIZE is a new program Corrigan has implemented which focuses on fall prevention and nutrition education all while having fun playing BINGO. BINGOCIZE is on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Bingo is played every Monday and Thursday at 12:30 p.m.

Cards and puzzles is played every day of the week at 8 a.m.

Happy Hands meets on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. to work on crocheting, knitting, and macramé projects.

Call 402-731-7210 for more information.

## 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 and game room access, special guest speakers and socials.

They also provide health and nutrition programs.

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

## Volunteer Connect offers a variety of opportunities

**D**o you have some spare time, a skill to share, and wish to contribute to your community? Private and non-profit agencies are looking for your help.

Please contact Tia Schoenfeld with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging's Volunteer Connect program at 402-444-6536, ext. 1045 for more information on the following volunteer opportunities:

- Fremont Area Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Opportunity Home Store helping with a variety of duties.
- Learning For All seeks individuals interested in helping teach and tutor adults in English. Our ESL programs are for non-native English speakers, In need of someone Monday through Friday between 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Library Volunteer at Ralston's Hollis & Helen Baright Public Library.
- Royal Oaks work with Life Enrichment staff to help provide meaningful activities for all residents.

• Tip Top Thrift Shop always needs volunteers on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1-4 p.m. Tip Top is located at 5910 Maple Street in downtown Benson. The volunteers would be stocking the Shop and waiting on customers.



• Volunteers Assisting Seniors VAS Volunteers are needed to provide nonbiased Medicare Counseling and Homestead Exemption Application Assistance through Volunteers Assisting Seniors. Free training is provided.

- ENOA Volunteer Connect Volunteers
- Quilters to create 'Busy Lap Blankets'
- Volunteers to write greeting cards of encouragement to residents in skilled care assisted living facilities and Meal of Wheels recipients.

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on your prescriptions

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**FREE** enrollment for Douglas County residents of all ages who are without prescription drug coverage.

**AVERAGE SAVINGS OF 20%!**

- No age requirements.
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This program is offered in a joint effort of Douglas County and the National Association of Counties (NACo).



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COURTESY PHOTO

**Omaha Magazine began with Todd Lemke in 1983. Over the last 40 years, additional staff in operations, sales, editorial, and design have joined the publishing family (including other Lemke relatives). Their mission is to serve the community of Omaha with the best city magazine possible. Their company motto, “It’s About All of Us.”**

--Lemke continued from page 1.  
and we are uploading all of the time,” Lemke said.

The Omaha Magazine has earned numerous awards and accolades, including the 2017 ‘Magazine Photographer of the Year’ award, won by photographer Bill Sitzmann, and the coveted ‘Magazine of the Year’ award in 2018 from Tulsa’s regional Great Plains Journalism Awards under the direction of then-executive editor Doug Meigs. More recently, managing editor Julius Fredrick won Great Plains’ 2020 award for ‘Lifestyle Writing’ for his piece on Omaha’s Japanese sister city, “From Shizuoka with Love,” and creative director Matt Wiczorek, along with Sitzmann and Sarah Lemke, brought home the ‘Magazine Cover’ award for “A Fatal Cut: The Human Cost of Omaha’s Fentanyl Flood” in 2023.

Lemke has even accomplished getting the magazine accepted in the City and Regional Magazine Association (CRMA). The CRMA’s purpose is to facilitate professional development and training opportunities for member magazines and to create opportunities to exchange information and ideas. The Association seeks to encourage high editorial and journalistic standards and to compile industry research

and data for the membership.

“In my world it’s a big deal,” Lemke said. “It took me 35 years, but now the magazine is up there with all the big boys (magazines) around the country.”

Most recently, Lemke received the lifetime achievement honor, as he was inducted into the Omaha Press Club’s 2023 Hall of Fame. Since 2008, the OPC Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame celebrates individuals who have made notable contributions to Omaha journalism and who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in the field.

For me it’s a big deal,” Lemke said. “I am in there with some notable people, so it was an honor. It gave me legitimacy.”

While the future of journalism is soon to be discovered, Lemke and the Omaha Magazine will continue to thrive.

“Our world is better than ever, and our readership is higher than ever. The genre for the last 15 years is that print is dead, but it is not dead because not all print is the same. But it all gets lumped together,” Lemke said. “The weaker the newspapers get, the stronger the magazines get. I enable people, I empower the employees, which means they can make mistakes. We work hard to be relevant, current and we hit every challenge head on.”

## Older veterans are more social: Data says, ‘Yes’

By Paula Crozier

Our usual preconceived notions on older veterans may seem bleak and are certainly not the norm according to recent statistics by the US Census Bureau. This report is based on data from the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) and can be found at: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/acs/acs-54.html>.

According to an article published in July, the U.S. Census Bureau found that U.S. Veterans aged 65 and older are actually less likely to be socially isolated from their peers. And there’s even better news as well. Nearly 49% of all U.S. Veterans are aged 65 and older and the largest group served during the Vietnam War.

Contrary to popular prejudices, older veterans are actually much better off than we think having higher incomes than other older adults. They are less likely to be at risk of social isolation at about 43% compared to similar aged peers at 46%.

Older veterans were, however, more likely to have a functional disability whether physical, neurological or emotional; but they were less likely to have a service-connected disability than compared with other veterans.

What does this all mean? What the public typically thinks of with an older

veteran is that they would usually have wartime era disabilities, mainly emotional and physical, however, this study proves this assumption incorrect.

The study found that these veterans are more socially interactive with family, neighbors and their peers. They are more actively involved and tend to be more philanthropic as well.

We can learn a lot from our older veterans who are more socially engaged, actively involved and more financially secure. It is believed this is due to the generation whose social circles were, in fact, social; not virtual. Older veterans grew up outside, worked at much younger ages than today’s youth, served in the military longer, and came home to a public who failed to recognize their service as they did the WWII veterans.

Thus, these older adults have had to create more relationships and through their efforts, have become a group to learn self sufficiency and inspiration.

*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.*

## New heat study shows need for further evaluation

Initial observations from the Urban Heat Watch Project, held last summer in Omaha, found that some areas had a temperature differential – an average of 9.4 degrees higher – than other areas on a route that ran through neighborhoods such as North and South Omaha, Dundee, midtown and areas of Omaha east of 90th Street.

The data was gathered in 2022, by study participants and community volunteers, who drove prescribed routes

with heat-measuring sensors attached to their vehicles at three times during the day – in the morning, afternoon and evening.

UNMC’s partners in the study, in addition to the NOAA, included the Claire M. Hubbard Foundation, the Douglas County Department of Health, the National Integrated Heat Health Information System, the Simple Foundation, CAPA, the National Weather Service and the YES! (Youth Enjoy Science) Program.



--MCC continued from page 1.

residents of the Gifford Park neighborhood near 32nd and Davenport streets in mind.

“When fully up and running, the MCC Freight Farm will be a solar-powered source of immersive learning with a focus on programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusion,” said Gary Girard, MCC associate vice president for community and workforce education.

The converted shipping container can grow more than 500 varieties of crops year-round in a nontraditional learning setting. According to the manufacturer, the hydroponic system can support more than 13,000 growing plants at one time using just five gallons of water per day. Over the course of a year, that can amount to an annual harvest of between two to six tons of produce — lettuces, leafy greens, herbs, root vegetables and more.

Yates Illuminates is a partnership committed to delivering adult education and employment services. Girard said the College’s on-site Freight Farm will create a wide variety of learning opportunities across many academic focus areas offered at MCC. It will also help launch a new certification for sustainability, as well as offer a full continuum of community programs that serve people from age 3 to the aging population.

Programs will continue to develop with input from Gifford Park neighbors and beyond.

“Our Freight Farm will showcase alternative and local growing solutions that are self-sustaining and create food self-sufficiency,



**The LED-powered “Freight Farm” is the first Freight Farm in Omaha, the second in Nebraska and the only one in the state with formalized academic programs attached to it.**

which can be an issue in urban settings,” Girard said.

Course content will have application for students studying business, culinary arts, health, horticulture, science, sustainability, technology and more.

“We’ll look at alternative ways of growing, the science behind it and food equity — all the ways we can use this location to serve under resourced folks in the community,” Girard said.

Girard added that determining how the Freight Farm will be implemented at MCC has relied on strong collaboration within the College’s culinary and horticulture programs, which are natural partners that function like academic consultants for developing curriculum.

“Our culinary and horticulture programs have been

highly involved in MCC sustainability initiatives, so it was a natural progression for these programs to provide input,” said Brian O’Malley, associate dean of MCC culinary, hospitality and horticulture. “We are excited for the opportunity to have this innovative growing system as part of our programs and the potential it brings for community education and impact.”

Classes will be offered later this summer with courses on organic farm-

ing, sustainable agriculture, farming technology, consequences of food deserts, supply and demand and plant care already scheduled.

Girard said one of the key benefits of the addition to the College’s footprint at Yates Illuminates is how the Freight Farm builds on existing programs at MCC.

For example, at MCC North Express, a satellite location in the Highlander Building on North 30th Street, visual lessons on

climate change are projected on the large Science on a Sphere globe display that hangs from the ceiling. Those global learning experiences can then be linked to local applications and lessons at Yates Illuminates’ Freight Farm by learning how to grow food from alternative sources, using renewable energy, etc.

“The Freight Farm really can intersect with almost every academic focus area that we have on campus, from farm-to-table dining as part of our culinary program to the technology running the Freight Farm you would learn about in our IT programs. You can manage the entire farm from an app on your phone,” Girard said.

Like all aspects of Yates Illuminates, the Freight Farm will be community-driven and collaborative. Girard said MCC will look for opportunities to connect with other schools and engage students.

For example, synergy can develop from MCC student workers connecting with others participating in youth programs at Yates Illuminates.

“Just like our food chain, we want everything that happens at Yates Illuminates to be interconnected. We hope to take student engagement to a whole new level and use the Freight Farm as a tool to bring people together,” Girard said.

FREIGHT FARMS PHOTO

### Ralston Senior Center

You’re invited to visit the Ralston Senior Center, 7301 Q St., Suite 100 this month for the following:

• **December 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29:** Double Deck Pinochle or other cards at 9:30 a.m.

• **December 6 & 20:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m

• **December 13:** Board meeting @ 9:30 a.m.

• **December 27:** The Merrymakers present music by Ben Tomasello @ 1 p.m.

Lunch is catered in on Wednesdays @ 11:30 a.m. A \$5.50 contribution is normally suggested for the meal. Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday. Games and bingo will be played after lunch. Contact Darla @ 402-331-1529 for reservations.

The annual Christmas luncheon will be held on December 13. The cost is \$10.00 for non-members. Games and bingo will be played after lunch.

On days the Ralston Public Schools are closed due to the weather, the Ralston Senior Center will also be closed.

Obtain an annual Ralston Senior Center membership for \$10.

Contact Ron Wilson @ 402-734-3421 for further information.



## Care Management Services

Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging



**There’s no place like home!**

**Are you age 60 or older and feeling like you might need some help?**

If so, the **Care Management Program** at the **Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging** is here to help! ENOA’s trained Care Managers can help guide you in finding the services and resources you want and need to safely remain in your home as long as possible!



**We are here to help!**

Call us at: **402-444-6536**

Ask for “**Information and Assistance**”

for more details about Care Management services.



**ENOA**

**Are you 60 years of age or older?**

Do you have a problem with:

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- homestead exemptions
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- reverse mortgages
- being a tenant
- POAs

**Legal Aid of Nebraska is here to help!**

Legal Aid provides free legal advice and assistance to Nebraska residents 60 years of age and older through our ElderAccessLine.

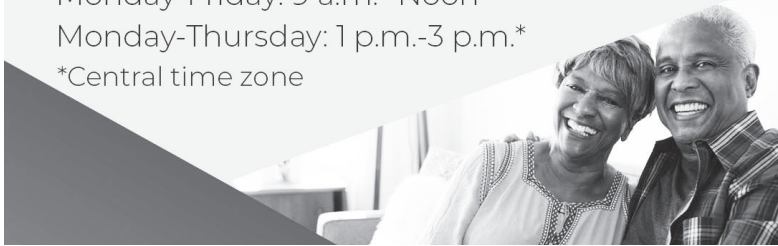
Reach our ElderAccessLine® toll-free at:

**1-800-527-7249**

Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. -Noon\*

Monday-Thursday: 1 p.m.-3 p.m.\*

\*Central time zone



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# Five reasons not to downsize your house

This article typically addresses the subject of home owners that want to sell their house and downsize. However, this month, I would like to discuss some reasons why home owners may not want to sell their house, or may be better off staying in their current house.

### INTEREST RATES

If you still have a mortgage on your house, and especially if you took out a mortgage or refinanced a few years ago when the rates were 3% or lower, now may not be the best time to sell your house, if you would need to take out a new mortgage at current rates of almost 8%.

Even though you may have a larger house than you need, your mortgage payments may be larger than they are now if you were to purchase a different home.

### CAN YOU AFFORD TO SELL YOUR HOUSE?

Whether you have a mortgage on your house or not, if you sell a house in a traditional manner, there are transaction costs to deal with.

Transaction costs include expenses such as real estate commissions, title insurance, the closing fee to the closing company or attorney, recording expenses, potentially paying some of the buyer’s closing costs, expenses to get the house ready for sale, and any deficiencies that are discovered with a buyer’s whole house inspection and appraisal, and other potentially unforeseen items.

And, because of the cur-

rent market condition, you may not “net” as much as you need or want, to make a move to a different home or apartment.

Also, if your house is “paid for,” moving to an apartment community or senior living community can be more expensive than your current living arrangement.

### WHEN A SMALLER HOME OR APARTMENT IS NOT AN OPTION

Several years ago, my company purchased a house from an individual that wanted to sell and move to an apartment. At the time, she thought that having a smaller space, and something she didn’t have to be responsible for any repairs or upkeep would be the best option for her.

Then, she had a bad encounter by moving to an apartment community that wasn’t a good fit for her. Her neighbors were noisy, she decided she didn’t have enough space, and she wanted her house back.

Although we wouldn’t have had to, we sold her house back to her (for the same price plus our expenses for the transaction), and she was able to move back to the home she knew and was comfortable in.

### SHARING A HOME WITH FAMILY

My company has also worked with seniors that have had family move in with them, or have moved in with other family members.

In one situation, a couple that had owned their house for decades moved into a larger house with one of their adult children and family that had created a private living space for them. This allowed the adult children to help their parents financially and in other ways by being

in the same house.

Of course, all parties will want to be “onboard” with this type of arrangement.

### AGING IN PLACE

Sometimes, a person loves their house, neighbors, and neighborhood and wants to stay in their current living arrangement as long as possible.

If your house can easily be modified or updated for aging in place, this may be the best option.

Bathrooms can be updated with walk in tubs, showers and grab bars. Kitchens can be arranged so that the items you use more often can be more accessible. There are chairlifts to accommodate stairs. Services can be hired for lawn care and snow removal.

There are even options for selling your house, but staying in the house as long as you’d like to be there, without any of the worries of repairs, upkeep, or maintenance.

### THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

As they say, sometimes there’s just no place like home. If you love the home you’re in, your neighbors, neighborhood, etc., the best option may be staying right where you are.

Just know you have options and resources available whether you want to stay where you are, or to look into other arrangements that may be a better fit.

*Ben Soucek is an author of the book Home Downsizing Secrets, and the owner and founder of Home Downsizing Solutions, a company that specializes in helping home owners transition from their current house to a new home, apartment, or other senior living community for more than 25 years.*

## Make medication safety your mantra

Did you remember to take your pills today? 66% of all adults in the United States take at least one prescription drug every day, but even the most cognizant, “with-it” individual may fumble when it comes to taking the correct dose of their prescriptions at the right time. Because of this, practicing medication safety is a must.

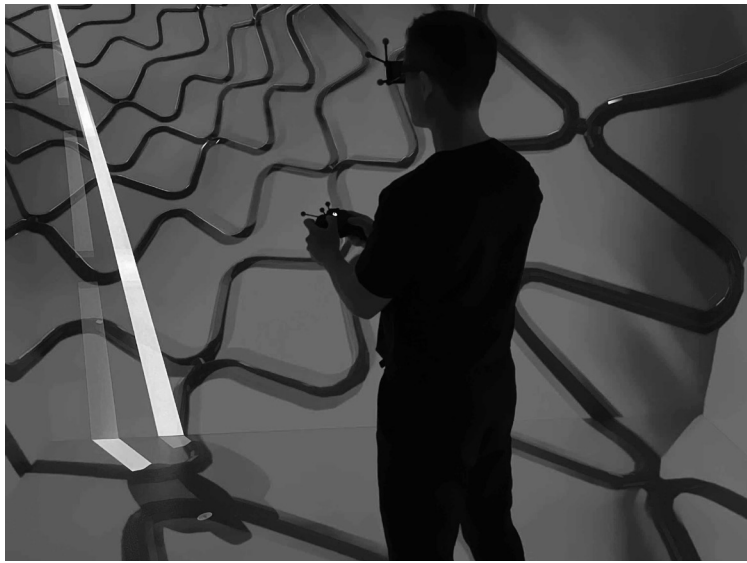
What are the most basic prescription safety practices? Draft up a list of the medications you are currently taking, as well as each drug’s dosage and frequency. Don’t forget to include over-the-counter (OTC) remedies, vitamins, supplements, or

any other medicinal items included in your daily routine, like ointments or injections. Follow safe prescription storage methods by keeping meds in a dry, safe space in their original packaging or bottle. While this may seem like common sense, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) receives over 100,000 medication error reports per year—so a refresher never hurts.

*This health tip is brought to you by Tabitha. To learn more, visit Tabitha at Tabitha.org or call 800-288-0147 or 308-389-6002.*

# UNMC pioneers combination of AI, simulations and extended reality in health care scenarios

Faculty from the UNMC Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, iEXCEL staff and technology from the Davis Global Center are contributing to the development of breakthroughs using Artificial Intelligence (AI), computational Simulations (S) and Extended Reality (ER). The novel use of these technologies in concert creates not just an acronym, but the first demonstration of a new concept, AISER.



COURTESY PHOTO

## UNMC faculty are contributing to the development of breakthroughs using Artificial Intelligence (AI), computational Simulations (S) and Extended Reality (ER) through tests.

Asia. Senior and corresponding author of the paper is Yiannis Chatzizisis, MD, PhD, now at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. Dr. Chatzizisis developed the technology and completed the project while chief of interventional cardiology at UNMC.

AI can mine and collect patient information, while S, or computational simulation, takes it to the next level through data analysis and prediction of data. And ER's role? "Disease complexity, interventional procedures and outcomes can be visualized and learned with extended reality (ER)," the authors wrote.

ER is where iEXCEL comes in. "They (Dr. Chatzizisis and cardiovascular faculty) brought us all of their data, but they didn't have a good way to visualize or experience it," said Bill Glass, artistic director, iEXCEL visualization. But Glass and the iEXCEL team created next-level models. "We were one of the first to combine different imaging modalities into one and run it as a simulation," he explained.

Pamela Boyers, PhD, associate vice chancellor of clinical simulation and iEXCEL, is another of the study's co-investigators from UNMC.

The use of 3-D modeling through ER, and iEXCEL, proved to be the missing piece to AI and computational simulations – and vice versa.

Through AISER, investigators can instantaneously run through 1,000 or more variations to come up with the best candidates for

turning population-sized data sets into personalized precision medicine. For example, creating ER models of potential new heart stents in action, then using patient data and computer programming to see which design would work best.

"It is exciting to see the impact of using AI not only to acquire data but to simulate clinical outcomes," said Daniel Anderson, MD, PhD, chief of cardiovascular medicine, another co-investigator. "It is impressive to be able to predict how a stent will deploy in a coronary artery when different segments within the area of deployment area are calcified, fibrosed and/or include a soft, fatty plaque."

Computational stent simulations by Dr. Chatzizisis, iEXCEL and team, and collaboration with industry helped lead to the invention of a new stent, specifically designed for larger and stiffer heart vessels.

The first of these new stents were successfully implanted in two patients at the Nebraska Medical Center in 2021.

Through AISER, Dr. Anderson said, "We will not only better refine our pre-clinical and clinical research trials, but also enable providers to select appropriate stents and deliver a personalized treatment strategy for atheromatous lesions. Thus, we continue to streamline and elevate our translational clinical research efforts and clinical practice."

(The University of Nebraska Medical Center provided this information).

AI, computational simulation and ER have each become crucial tools. But together, as AISER, "their symbiosis and synergy might unlock significant potential in patient-specific health care delivery," according to a new paper, "Artificial Intelligence, Computational Simulations and Extended Reality: Revolutionary Tools in Cardiovascular Interventions," published in the Journal of American College of Cardiology: Cardiovascular Interventions.

"This report demonstrates what can be achieved when the AI that is supporting advanced 3-D imaging at the Davis Global Center is combined with the knowledge and skill of our Nebraska Medicine Interventional Cardiology clinical team," said UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, MD, one of the paper's co-authors.

"The successful design, 3-D modeling and clinical care will define the future of 'serious medicine and extraordinary care,'" Dr. Gold said.

AI and informatics technology are becoming increasingly integrated into health care, and UNMC is among the vanguard. The University of Nebraska established the UNMC Center for Intelligent Health Care (CIHC) in 2020.

John Windle, MD, Holland Distinguished Chair of Cardiovascular Science, the CIHC's inaugural director and another of the paper's co-authors, said that establishing AISER "illustrates the potential that can come from optimizing human and computer integration."

A handful of UNMC faculty are authors on the publication, which includes collaborators from across the country, Europe and

## King Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Glasses, slangily  
6 Acid type  
11 "Cut that out!"  
12 Alphas' opposites  
14 He loved Roxane  
15 Not certain  
16 PC key  
17 Blue Grotto isle  
19 Hearty quaff  
20 Floral rings  
22 Vat  
23 Peevish fit  
24 Song of praise  
26 Olympic skater Brian  
28 "Certainly!"  
30 Away from SSW  
31 Mexican chili pepper  
35 Labrador explorer  
39 Nashville venue
- 40 "A spider!" tickets  
42 "— Breckinridge" 13 Handle  
43 Fib 18 Tavern  
44 King of Judea 21 In a sneaky way  
46 Taunting laugh 23 Fulton's power  
47 Captivate 25 — culpa  
49 Comic Ray 27 Business mag  
51 Bagel choice 29 Showed scorn  
52 Retaliate 31 Fishing rods  
53 Trusty horse 32 Speaks one's mind  
54 Dweebs 33 Chicken serving
- DOWN**
- 1 Fashions 34 "— the ramparts ..."  
2 Shakespear- 36 Manually  
ean heiress 37 Arboreal apes  
3 Ecol. watch- 38 Western resort  
dog lake  
4 Title akin to 41 Imam's holy  
POTUS book  
5 Brown ermine 44 Abode  
6 Kentucky brew 45 Peace symbol  
7 Hotel chain 48 Astronaut  
8 In medias — Jemison  
9 Big lizard 50 Mal de —  
10 Comedian George  
11 Overcharge for

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
11							12					13
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16				17		18				19		
20			21		22				23			
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39					40		41		42			
43				44			45		46			
47			48				49		50			
51							52					
	53						54					

### This Month's Crossword Puzzle

		7			4			3
	9			1				5
4			5			9		8
	2			8				3
1			2			6		
		4			3			9
	7				8	5		
5				6				1
		2	3					7

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

### This Month's Sudoku

## Omaha Fire Department

The Omaha Fire Department's Public Education and Affairs Department will install free smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors inside the residences of area homeowners.

To have a free smoke and/or carbon monoxide detector installed inside your home, send your name, address, and telephone number to: Omaha Fire Department, Smoke/Carbon, Monoxide Requests at 1516 Jackson St., Omaha NE, 68102.

For more information, please call 402-444-3560.

## Omaha Community Playhouse

It just isn't Christmas without "A Christmas Carol."

Experience one of Omaha's favorite holiday traditions as Ebenezer Scrooge takes us on a life-changing journey to discover the true meaning of Christmas at the Omaha Community Playhouse.

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For more information, call the Omaha Community Playhouse at 402-553-0800.

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## ADRC Nebraska Aging and Disability Resource Center



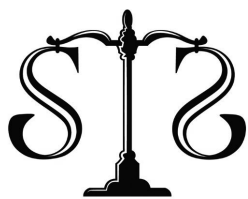
The Aging and Disability Resource Center is the first stop for information related to aging or living with a disability.

Call us for information about connecting you to services in your area.

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In some cases, physicians have been able to reduce regular medications because of regular massage sessions.

Elderly people often suffer from symptoms caused by conditions like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. This can often leave them with limited mobility and poor circulation. On top of this, many elderly people can report feeling depressed or even lonely. According to Omaha Blue



COURTESY PHOTO

A massage will help improve sleep habits and quality of sleep, alleviate some symptoms of Alzheimer's, increase mobility by improving postural stability and balance, improve blood circulation, it helps to alleviate symptoms of osteoarthritis, stimulates the nervous system, reduces stress and it gives you something to look forward to.

## Massage for older adults: Multiple benefits of touch

Most of us enjoy a massage to help us ease our tension and soothe away aches and pains. Elderly people can really benefit from regular massage, as it's such an enjoyable and relaxing, non-invasive way to help manage the inevitable symptoms that go hand in hand with getting older.

There's no doubt that a regular massage has the potential to help improve your quality of life, and this applies to elderly people too.

The positive effects of massage on the health of elderly people are well documented by research. It's been proven that the gentlest of massages can benefit the circulation and nervous system, so if a gentle touch is required for more frail customers, it will still work just as well as a powerful sports massage would for an athlete.

Geriatric gentle massage is known to help stimulate the circulation naturally and without causing any discomfort, so many older people are happy to give themselves over to the hands of an expert massage therapist when they are feeling tense and in need of healing touch.

One important benefit of massage is that it doesn't have any side effects and won't interact with medicines that the elderly person is taking for conditions that often affect them (diabetes, depression, Parkinson's, dementia and other common conditions.)

In some cases, physicians have been able to reduce regular medications because of regular massage sessions.

Elderly people often suffer from symptoms caused by conditions like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. This can often leave them with limited mobility and poor circulation. On top of this, many elderly people can report feeling depressed or even lonely. According to Omaha Blue

Waves Martial Arts, Fitness and Health co-owner Michele Helaney, geriatric massage can help boost their physical health, but also relieve the depression that sometimes goes with it. It also gives older people access to comforting touch.

There is even evidence that degenerative conditions like Parkinson's have responded to regular half hour massages. Massage in elderly people can:

- Help boost quality of life and self-esteem.
- Improve sleep quality.
- Relieve stress, depression and even loneliness.
- Provide relief for headaches and other aches and pains.
- Restore some lost mobility due to Parkinson's disease, arthritis and other limiting conditions.

How is a geriatric massage different?

Geriatric massage uses some of the same techniques you'll find in general massage but tailored to the specific needs of elderly people.

• A geriatric massage is likely to last for less time than a standard massage session, as a long treatment can be too much for an older person. Most elderly massage sessions don't last more than half an hour.

• We use extra gentle techniques; gentle movements are used that are designed to be soothing at the same time as improving circulation. This can be especially helpful if someone has a diabetic foot condition or has a build-up of muscle tension.

• Gentle hands and feet massage to soothe swollen joints and relieve stiffness.

• Stronger movements, friction and pressure can be used with care to help improve flexibility in larger areas like shoulders.

Massage is a lovely therapy that can be enjoyed by people of all ages – if you know someone who would benefit from massage, but thinks it's not for them because they are 'too old' – treat them to a session and see if you can put the smile back on their face.

# The joys of safe driving

Have you ever been asked the question: "Do you consider yourself a safe driver?"

Most of us, without giving it a lot of thought, would readily answer, yes. But what makes us a safe driver? No speeding tickets or maybe no crashes? That may be part of it but it is really about forming an attitude that focuses on safety each time you drive.

Every driver, no matter how safe, faces the risk of an accident and an injury. Safe drivers don't rely on other drivers to drive safely, they drive defensively and expect the unexpected. They avoid being distracted while driving, and make it a point to always drive a well-maintained, fully serviced vehicle. So, how can you ensure you are following these basic principles and are being, "the best you can be," every time you get behind the wheel?

One way is to refresh your driving skills periodically by attending an AARP Smart Driver Course. AARP provides a four hour online or in-person course for senior drivers. The focus of this article will be on the in-person course.

The AARP Smart Driver In-person Course. It is a four hour refresher course specifically designed for drivers age 50 and older. During the in-person course you will receive a 128 page Smart Driver Guidebook and be led through the information by a certified instructor. It's important to note that the information was developed by a team of safety experts and is supported by a series of professional videos to help deliver the message.

## TOPICS

As we age we often start experiencing physical and cognitive deficiencies that have a direct impact on our driving ability.

A major theme of the course instruction is that drivers, vehicles, and the road environments on which they operate are in constant change. The changes come whether they are ready for them or not.

The course material illustrates these changes and offers strategies on how to make the necessary adjustments to remain safe. Some of the key topics covered are: basic rules of the road, effects of medication on driving, how to reduce driver distractions, and

how to deal with certain challenging conditions like rain, fog, and vehicle breakdowns.

Two segments of the course deal with how to recognize the signs of unsafe driving behaviors in others, and assessing your own driving ability. The segment on assessing unsafe and undesirable driving behaviors offers participants some insights on behaviors to be looking for.

In addition, there are suggestions for the best ways to engage someone in a conversation about their driving. It is often a difficult decision and task to approach a family member or friend concerning their driving. If, or when that time comes, having this information and being able to review the course information on the subject will be very helpful.

Likewise, the section on alternative travel covers various modes of travel options available that will keep a person mobile when it is time to lessen their driving. The information covers planning steps such as: relying on family and friends, service organizations, public transportation, taxis, or other car services like Uber. Finally, it's fair to say at many of our participants comment that the information and interactions shared at the course improved their attitude about driving safely. In conclusion, if only one driving behavior has been changed for the better, the course is time well spent.

## THE INSTRUCTOR

Your instructor at the in-person course will frequently be one of your peers. That is to say a 'senior citizen' that can relate to many of the challenges of driving as we age.

He or she has completed training to become a certified Driver Safety Instructor for AARP. Our instructors are often retired people that come from varied backgrounds such as: sales and marketing, law enforcement, and traffic engineering, just to name a few. They contribute their time and experience in a classroom setting designed to share information and inspire interaction among the participants.

## INSURANCE DISCOUNT

A discount on your auto

insurance may be one of the perks for attending the course. Nebraska does not have a law that mandates an automobile insurance discount for drivers completing an approved driver improvement course.

However, many insurance companies in Nebraska will offer a discount upon completion of the course. You will need to consult with your insurance agent for the specifics on whether or not they will provide a discount.

## DRIVER SAFETY COURSE

How to find a Driver safety Course available in Nebraska: AARP has a Course Locator available on the internet at: <https://www.aarp.org/auto/driver-safety/locations/>.

Typically, there are dozens of courses scheduled in Nebraska each year. You can search by city, county, or ZIP code to get the details on the location, address, date, and time of a course near you.

Interested in becoming an AARP Driver Safety Instructor?

The Nebraska Driver Safety Program currently has positions available for volunteer instructors. All are welcome, however, at present, the primary need is in Central and Western Nebraska.

So, if you are interested, or you know someone that may be interested, pass this information on and get in touch with AARP. You will have the opportunity to teach courses in your immediate area, often at locations of your choice. Interested parties must start the process by completing a four hour online or in-person Smart Driver course. After the course, they will be eligible to start the online, approximately four hour, self-paced Instructor Training Course. Duties include: Actively organize, promote, and conduct at least three courses a year. Ideally, you should have working knowledge of video technology, access to e-mail, and the Internet. Preferably, you should have some experience in public speaking and be able to work with diverse populations.

For more information, contact Norm Huber, Nebraska State Coordinator at 402-210-3472 or email to [normhuber87@gmail.com](mailto:normhuber87@gmail.com).

Call Marsha at 402-444-6536

## ENOA is recruiting volunteers to become Ombudsman Advocates

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

ENOA's Ombudsman advocates visit residents 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 advocates must complete 20 hours of initial classroom training and 18 hours per year after the first year to remain certified.

During the training, the volunteers learn about residents' rights, aging issues, Medicare, Medicaid, communication skills, how to investigate residents' complaints, the importance of confidentiality, and federal and state rules, regulations, and laws regarding Nebraska's long-term care facilities and assisted living communities.

Before being assigned to a long-term care facility or an assisted living community, new volunteers will make four visits to a site with an experienced Ombudsman Advocate to learn more about what the program entails. After a three-month probationary period, the new volunteers are certified as Ombudsman Advocates. Certified Ombudsman Advocates will be assigned to a long-term care facility or an assisted living community where they'll visit for two hours a week to meet with administrators, residents, and the residents' family members to address concerns.

For more information about ENOA's Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, please call Marsha Peters at 402-444-6536.

## First United Methodist Church

First United Methodist Church has some excellent adult curriculums available. They are free for any Christian group, which would like to study prayer, discipleship and beliefs.

Call First United Methodist Church at 402-556-6262 if you wish to receive more information about the list of the studies available.



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**INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS.**

**MAKE A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN.**

# Barrier free shower safety, elegance

I know dealing with a family member who needs a barrier free shower is already stressful. You may have fallen into one of these scenarios:

- Mom is not moving around so well. You're considering having her live with you. You're not sure how to make your home and bathroom safe.
- Your spouse got hurt at work. Climbing over the tub to take a shower is an accident waiting to happen.
- Your son was seriously injured in a motorcycle ac-

cident. He's now in a wheelchair. Life won't be the same. You need to design a shower which works for him and won't add to his (already) frustrated state of mind.

Let's review some basic information about barrier free showers.

A regular shower has a raised threshold, the entry of a barrier-free shower is flush with the floor, creating a seamless surface that gives your bathroom a spacious, airy look. More importantly, it's convenient for everyone

from kids to grandparents, including people with mobility challenges.

Unlike traditional showers, a walk-in shower doesn't require a shower curtain or a shower door. This creates more design freedom and an illusion of a spacious bathroom. Another advantage is the continuity of tiles. Because a walk-in shower is on the ground floor, the same bathroom tiles can be placed within the shower area. When installing a linear shower drain, you can now choose

large tiles without damaging them.

Also cleaning and a time-saving installation due to a one-sided slope is a benefit.

Traditional shower drains are placed in the center of the shower and sloped in four directions towards the drain. Creating this four-sided slope is considerably more time-consuming and can only be done with small floor tiles.

In comparison, linear shower drains only require a single slope to work properly, this is easier to con-

struct and takes less effort to clean.

It's important to waterproof your wet area and additionally your bathroom to avoid any leakage. Most moisture related damages result from an improper installation of liquid sealed sealing membranes. A walk-in shower doesn't have a shower tray, meaning you'll be showering directly on your bathroom floor.

Freedom in design is without any doubt the most important aspect when building or renovating the bathroom area. That's why most modern bathrooms choose a walk-in shower nowadays. Although the size of your shower is determined by the available floor space, you retain your freedom by implementing your bathroom design ideas compared to a traditional shower tray.

Additionally, you can choose glass panels for your shower walls. You'll also have total freedom of choosing any shower head you prefer.

The walk-in shower completely eliminates the need to step in and out of a bathtub or shower base, there are no barriers or thresholds and you can let your bathroom floor tile reach into the shower. Once, a walk-in shower was considered only as a convenience for those with mobility problems, children or the elderly. Now, it's a fantastic and future-proof addition to any (modern) bathroom.

A classic shower, like the traditional shower cabin and base, has hard to clean parts and corners where dirt or mold can easily settle. A walk-in shower has opposite characteristics. These spacious showers often have a minimalist design with few places where water and dirt can settle. When installed correctly, a walk-in shower with linear shower drain will drain the water more quickly and efficiently, which means less cleaning and more enjoying.

A walk-in shower offers a lot of shower ideas. You have the freedom to choose any type of shower tile. From ceramic to mosaic. You can choose any type of shower wall such as glass panels or a tiled wall. If you want to keep a minimalist design, you can choose built-in wall niches to hide your bathroom accessories.

(David Kohll of Kohll's RX)

## CAN YOUR PHARMACY DO ALL OF THIS?



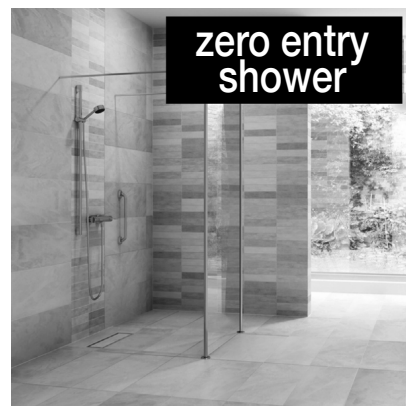
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## Flaherty Senior Consulting

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:

• **Jan. 9, March 12, May 14, July 9, Sept. 10, Nov. 12**  
St. Vincent de Paul Church  
14330 Eagle Run Dr.

• **Dec. 13, Feb. 21, April 17, June 19, Aug. 21, Oct. 16, Dec. 18**  
St. Timothy Lutheran Church  
93rd and Dodge streets

• **Dec. 7, Feb. 1, April 4, June 6, Aug. 1, Oct. 3, Dec. 5**  
The Servite Center of Compassion  
72nd St. and Ames Cr.

• **Jan. 27, March 23, May 18, July 27, Sept. 28, Nov. 30**  
Faith Westwood  
United Methodist Church  
4814 Oaks Ln.

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.

Registration is required to attend each gathering.

Visit [flahertyconsulting.net](http://flahertyconsulting.net) or call 402-312-9324 for more information.

Flaherty also provides private consultations with family caregivers to help them develop individual plans for their loved ones.

For information on private consultations, Solutions Group meeting times, and/or to register to attend a Solutions Group, email Nancy at [flahertyconsulting@cox.net](mailto:flahertyconsulting@cox.net) or call/text her at 402-312-9324.

## Christmas at Union Station

It's the most wonderful time of the year at The Durham Museum.

Christmas at Union Station is back for another season of festivities during the month of December. From the region's largest Christmas tree to holidays around the globe and visits from Santa himself, feel holiday magic at The Durham. Visit the Durham Museum website for a full schedule of events. For more information, please call 402-444-5071.

## Bright Nights at Lauritzen Gardens

Set a merry mood with friends and family and explore the illuminated indoor gardens on select nights during the Merry & Bright: Holiday Poinsettia Show.

From a 20-ft. tall poinsettia tree to a tropical paradise, see festive installations that glow and shine in December.

For more information, call the Lauritzen Gardens at 402-346-4002.

8	5	7	9	2	4	1	6	3
2	9	3	8	1	6	4	5	7
4	6	1	5	3	7	9	2	8
6	2	9	4	8	1	7	3	5
1	3	5	2	7	9	6	8	4
7	8	4	6	5	3	2	1	9
3	7	6	1	9	8	5	4	2
5	4	8	7	6	2	3	9	1
9	1	2	3	4	5	8	7	6

This Month's  
Sudoku Answers

S	P	E	C	S		B	O	R	I	C		
S	T	O	P	I	T		O	M	E	G	A	S
C	Y	R	A	N	O		U	N	S	U	R	E
A	L	T		C	A	P	R	I		A	L	E
L	E	I	S		T	U	B		S	N	I	T
P	S	A	L	M		B	O	I	T	A	N	O
					Y	E	S		N	N	E	
P	O	B	L	A	N	O		C	A	B	O	T
O	P	R	Y		E	E	K		M	Y	R	A
L	I	E		H	E	R	O	D		H	A	H
E	N	A	M	O	R		R	O	M	A	N	O
S	E	S	A	M	E		A	V	E	N	G	E
S	T	E	E	D		N	E	R	D	S		

This Month's  
Crossword Answers

# Day of the Dead celebrated at ISC

NEW HORIZONS  
PHOTO

The Day of the Dead altar sits in place during the annual Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration at the Intercultural Senior Center, on 5545 Center St. The festivities this year included trick-or-treating, a variety of games traditional decorations and an altar display. The celebration took place in October.



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# Local Vietnam veteran reflects on his career, time with family

By John Fey

A cancer diagnosis last spring wasn't going to keep Ralph Altvater away from Plattsmouth's Bay Hills Golf Course, although he admitted it made his 9-hole rounds a bit more challenging. Even on days when he was a bit too tired to play, you would find him shooting the breeze with his usual playing partner, Dean Novotny, and others hanging out in the clubhouse.



Altvater

Plattsmouth) in 2014.

Like many veterans, he chose to retire in Nebraska after his working days ended. He's proud to be a third generation to serve his country, following his father and grandfather.

As a "military brat," Ralph's family moved quite often during his growing years.

"I graduated from high school in Spain at a military school," Altvater said. "Most of our service time

was spent down south. We were stationed at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. We were stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama, and stationed in Lake Charles, Louisiana, for six years, which was our longest stay anywhere."

The family eventually landed at Offutt Air Force Base, and that's when Ralph met Jackie, who grew up in Bellevue. He earned his college degree at Omaha University in 1967 (a year before it became UNO), a year after the couple married. Soon after graduation, he received his draft notice from the Army.

"I didn't have to report until Labor Day weekend," Altvater said. "The only time Jackie spent with me was at Fort Benning (Georgia) as I was preparing to go to Vietnam. So, by being in Vietnam, I was away from her for a year."

While in Vietnam, he worked as an air traffic controller.

"I was probably going to be a helicopter door gunner," Altvater said, reflecting on his advanced training before being shipped overseas. "It all depended on what the needs were in

Vietnam, what your skill level was and things like that."

As Ralph explained it, he and his co-workers helped various aircraft take off and land. Their "control tower" was nothing like you would see at U.S. airports.

Planes would land 24 hours each day, which meant they had to find a way to light the runway at night.

"We used canisters along the runway," Altvater said. "And every day, we had to fill them with fuel. Then, just before dark, we would light pieces of toilet paper, drop them in the canister, and it would pretty much burn all night."

To be sure, there was danger close to the runways. He remembers the ongoing noise.

"While in Qua Loi," he said, "We were hit by rockets and mortars 100 times. Sometimes mortar fire happened while we were in the chow line."

Even during those attacks, Ralph and the other air traffic controllers worked six-hour shifts.

"I preferred working early in the morning," he said, "Because guys who worked in the morning were within

walking distance of the mess hall. One of us would stay in the tower while the other one would go eat."

His Vietnam tour lasted right at one year, and he shipped out for a long-awaited reunion with his wife in San Francisco, which is where Ralph mustered out of the Army.

Now a veteran, it was time to return to civilian life.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do," he said. "I struggled a little bit finding a job."

Ralph landed a position with Scott Paper Company, the world's largest manufacturer and marketer of sanitary tissue products. He sold various items to area grocery stores, and he had to compete against other vendors.

"The store managers always had buddies," he said, "And they took care of their buddies. When I came along, I hardly got the time of day. If you built a display, you might get your stuff on the floor."

The company transferred Ralph to the Des Moines area. After his first six months there, he received a review that he didn't quite agree with and quit his job.

Soon after, he was hired by UNO to help with purchasing as a buyer. He eventually was promoted as head of purchasing. He then moved to Metro Community College, where he spent 10 years as director of college services. He wore many hats there.

At the end of his time

at Metro, a friend who worked at Boys Town let Ralph know about a purchasing position there.

He spent the next 29 years in the purchasing department. Meanwhile, Ralph and Jackie lived in Bellevue.

In 2013, at age 70, Ralph retired from Boys Town. He and Jackie began thinking about another move. One of the homes they looked at was in Buccaneer Bay.

The summer of 2014, they settled into their new home and reconnected with friends Dean and Jackie Novotny.

Ralph said he was always active when not working. He played slow-pitch softball until just before reaching 60. Then he took up golf. He and Dean Novotny are regular partners for weekday 9-hole rounds.

Last spring came the news that Ralph had developed Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma cancer. He began treatments every three weeks and completed them last December.

Despite that setback, Ralph said life in Buccaneer Bay can't be beat.

"We love Buccaneer Bay," he said. "We love the wildlife we see. We like all the people we've become friends with, especially surrounding golf. And I love the index-finger wave from the steering wheel when you're driving down the street. That is one of my favorite things about Nebraska. Most of the people out here are really great."

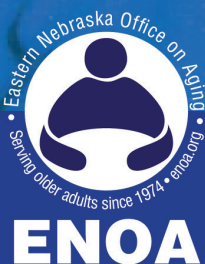
**Come join us as a Senior Companion and bring a smile to a fellow senior in your community!**



## Millard Senior Center

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

- **December 1:** Start handing out secret Santa lists
  - **December 5:** Cookie Exchange @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 8:** The Durham Museum Visit @ 9:45 a.m.
  - **December 11:** THEOS (To Help Each Other Socially) @ 12:30 p.m.
  - **December 13:** Making shorts and sundresses @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 13:** Annual Christmas party @ 10:30 a.m.
  - **December 19:** Candy cane jar of candy. Guess how many to win
  - **December 20:** P.A.W.S @ 10 a.m.
  - **December 22:** Ugly sweater contest @ 10 a.m.
- Tai Chi every Mondays and Fridays @ 9:30 a.m.  
MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.  
Board meeting is always the first Wednesday of the Month.  
Chair Volleyball Thursdays @ 10 a.m.  
Dominoes Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.  
For more information, please call 402-546-1270.



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