



A publication of the
Eastern Nebraska
Office on Aging

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PERMIT NO. 389

April 2023 | Vol. 48 | No. 4

New Horizons

Artisan Commons looks for more donations to continue its mission

By Emmalee Scheibe

Known for its eclectic items and unique spin on antique and vintage furniture, Duet Artisan Commons is helping those with intellectual and developmental disabilities learn a variety of job skills.

Artisans is a vintage retail store in Bellevue that sells refurbished furniture, décor, vintage items, housewares and other items. This wouldn't be possible without the donations they receive from those in the community. The store accepts a variety of items including furniture, vintage décor, dishes, frames and more. Through donations and customers, Artisan Commons continues its mission – to help those supported by Duet to learn hands on job skills while earning an income.

Each donation gives those supported by Duet the opportunity to learn skills like painting, sanding,



While shopping at Artisan Commons people can find refurbished and upcycled furniture, knick-knacks, jewelry, accessories, vintage items, and more.

woodworking, and more.

Charity Rotolo, Artisan's store manager, said donations usually take one to two weeks to be refurbished or repurposed, but some can

take longer.

The variety of items they receive allows everyone to try something new, said Duane Bugge, a retail coach at Artisan Commons.

"We don't see the same items over and over again," he said. "Sometimes the items we receive aren't able to be refurbished to their original state, so we'll turn them into something new."

One of the projects employees are working on is vintage school desks – which are now being turned into plant stands.

Since everyone has been able to try something new, they have all been able to find their own niche, Rotolo said.

Learning job skills doesn't stop with the projects. Each customer gives them the opportunity to learn other skills like customer service, pricing, staging, handling money, running a cash register and cleaning.

"It's been great to see them become more comfortable talking to customers – which seems to be their favorite thing to do," said Marissa

--DUET continued on page 8.

Omaha Public Library provides resources, sense of community

By Ron Petersen

Being able to visit the local public library despite living in a digital world of convenience with virtual platforms for community engagement can spark remembrance from past experiences.

Whether it was going to read your favorite book as a kid or reuniting with a special novel that brings new perspective in life.

The Omaha Public Library offers many resources and opportunities for anyone to enjoy the library around the eastern Nebraska area.

"Libraries are here for you, and they are here for everyone in the community," Omaha Public Library assistant library director, Rachel Steiner said.

In the community, the Omaha Public Library offers more than book rental services. Through the resource center, the Omaha Public Library allows free access to eBooks, eMagazines, audiobooks, music, online research and more with a library card.

"Our main resources is what you'd typically find, which is materials, it's called Books & Reading,"

Steiner said.

Through the Books & Reading, the Omaha Public Library offers many book genres and different formats to read books.

"We have books on CDs and a lot of people actually love that. It's a great way for them to be able listen to a book without having to strain their eyes. We have DVDs and we also have audio books," Steiner said. "We have graphic novels and books in different languages. We have different types of books such as mystery, sci-fi and nonfictional books. We have something for everyone no matter what you are looking for."

There are many other resources to use that may get overlooked, but can be used at any point, which includes by subject: Books & Reading, Business & Finance, Consumer Resources, en Español, Entertainment, Genealogy, Health & Wellness, Homework Help & Research, Jobs & Careers, Law, Newspapers

--Library continued on page 8.



Omaha
Public
Library



National Volunteer Month

In April, National Volunteer Month is being celebrated by ENOA and millions of Americans as a way to thank the volunteers, recruit new men, women, and children into these vital programs, and encourage volunteerism throughout the United States.

Learn more about volunteer programs sponsored by ENOA on **Page 16.**

Volunteer Connect offers a variety of opportunities

Do 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:

- Royal Oaks Assisted Living is looking for volunteers to do a variety of things, including book clubs, gardening, arts.
- Intercultural Center Volunteers to teach the craft of tatting.
- Intercultural Center Early English is looking for English teachers from 10:20 AM-11:20 AM. M-F.
- 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.

- Volunteers willing to create cards of encouragement that are given to residents in skilled care and assisted living facilities and Meals on Wheels clients.
- Quilters to create 'busy lap blankets' for individuals in long-term care and assisted living facilities.



- Tip Top Thrift Shop always needs volunteers on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday from 10:00 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.
- Volunteer Connect wants men and women to participate in a focus group.
- More volunteers are needed to knit and sew baby caps, clothing and prayer shawls.

Flaherty Senior Consulting

Caring for a loved one is difficult, and the challenges are amplified during a pandemic. Join Flaherty Senior Consulting for a series of Solutions Group gatherings that will address the questions and challenges caregivers face.

Solutions Groups provide opportunities for caregivers to learn how to deal with various issues, obtain skills and knowledge, engage in discussions, and interact with others in similar circumstances.

Upcoming meeting dates and locations are:

- **May 9, July 11, Sept. 12, Nov. 14**
St. Vincent de Paul Church
14330 Eagle Run Dr.
- **April 19, June 21, Aug. 16, Oct. 18, Dec. 13**
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
93rd and Dodge streets
- **April 6, June 1, Aug. 3, Oct. 5, Dec. 7**
The Servite Center of Compassion
72nd St. and Ames Cr.
- **May 20, July 22, Sept. 23, Nov. 18**
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. Masks are mandatory and social distancing will be observed.

Visit 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 or call/text her at 402-312-9324.

Fremont Friendship Center

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

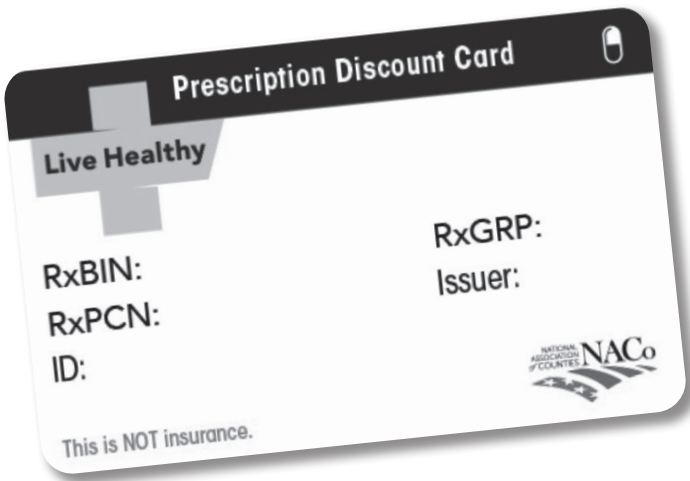
A meal is served weekdays @ 11:30 a.m. Reservations, which are due by noon the business day prior to the meal the participant wishes to enjoy, can be made by calling 402-727-2815. A \$4.25 contribution is suggested for the meal.

This month's activities will include:

- **April 4:** Presentation from Fremont Therapy and Wellness @ 10 a.m.
 - **April 5:** Special music with John Worsham @ 10:30 a.m.
 - **April 6:** Entertainment provided by the Merry Maker's-Cynthia Johnson @ 10:30 a.m.
 - **April 11:** Casino Trip to Lincoln. Reservations required and space is limited. Cost is \$20 for chartered bus ride. Lunch and gaming are on your own. The plan is to leave the center at 10:15 a.m. and return to the center at 3:30 p.m. The center will close at 10:15 a.m. (after Tai Chi).
 - **April 12:** The Links present special music @ 10 a.m.
 - **April 13:** Presentation by the Dream Weaver @ 10 a.m.
 - **April 19:** Special music by Kim Eames @ 10:30 a.m.
 - **April 20:** EcoFair volunteers will join the center for lunch
 - **April 25:** Board Meeting @ 1:30 p.m.
 - **April 26:** Special Music with Bill Chrastil @ 10 a.m. Craft Class is every other Tuesday (April 4 & 18) from 1:30-2:30 p.m.
- Tai Chi offered every Tuesday and Friday from 9:15-10 a.m.
- For meal reservations and more information, please call Laurie at 402-727-2815.

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nacorx.org

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

Medicare and You: Managing medication plans for the future

Medicare Advantage plans, including part D drug coverage, and/or part D stand-alone drug plans, in most cases, cannot be changed until the Annual Open Enrollment Period in 2023, which begins October 15 and ends December 7. This does not mean that, as a beneficiary, you are without options to help manage your plan throughout the year.

Each part D plan has an extensive formulary. Most of the common medications we take are included in the plan formulary. Federal law requires plans to include at least two drugs from each class of drug category on its formulary. Most plans cover many more than two options.

Often during the year, we experience changes to medications that are prescribed. When your provider prescribes medications, be sure and ask for generics. This may seem obvious, but there are nuances within your part D plan of which you may not be aware. For example, there may be different prices for generic medications within the same class. Ask your provider if there is more than one generic option which may successfully treat your condition. You can check prices for each suggested medication by calling your pharmacy directly. Ask your provider to prescribe the least expensive option.

Most Part D plans use a tiered formulary. Tiers are a method by which plans classify drugs by cost and determine copays and co-insurance amounts. Plans generally have five or sometimes six tiers. Tier 1 and 2 are usually generic tiers, tier 3 is usually for brand name medications and tiers 4, 5, and 6 are generally for specialty medications. The tier classification used by your part D drug plan can make a difference in the copay or coinsurance you have to pay for the medication. If you have an expensive copay due to a tier classification, you may be able to request a tier exception. Talk to your pharmacy and ask if your copay is high because your prescription has been placed in a higher tier by your plan compared with similar drugs on the formulary. You generally will not be able to request a tier exception if the medication you take



— VOLUNTEERS — ASSISTING SENIORS

is a specialty medication. Contact your part D plan to request a tier exception. Your prescribing physician may be able to provide you with a letter supporting your request. Your plan must give you a decision within 72 hours of receiving your request.

If you take expensive medications and a tier exception is not a possibility, there are other courses of action for you to investigate. The State of Nebraska and the Federal Government offer assistance programs to help offset some of the costs you may incur.

Medicaid, administered by the State of Nebraska, offers two levels of assistance: Full Medicaid and Partial Medicaid. Both levels will assist beneficiaries in not only reducing copays for medications but also help offset other healthcare and Medicare costs. Qualification is determined by income and asset guidelines.

Full Medicaid Eligibility Guidelines

Individuals having incomes less than \$14,580 annually or \$1,215 monthly with assets totaling no more than \$4,000 (not including car and home).

Married couples living together having incomes less than \$19,728 annually or \$1,644 monthly with assets totaling less than \$6,000 (not including car and home).

Qualification for Full Medicaid provides several benefits including co-pays of \$1.45 for generics and \$4.30 for brand name medications. These co-pays are for 30-day supplies.

Partial Medicaid Eligibility Guidelines

Individuals having incomes less than \$19,692 annually or \$1,641 monthly with assets totaling no more than \$9,090 (not including car and home).

Married couples living together having incomes less than \$26,640 annually or \$2,220 monthly with

assets totaling less than \$13,630 (not including car and home).

Low Income Subsidy (LIS) Eligibility Guidelines

LIS is sometimes called “Extra Help” and is administered by Social Security. Eligibility for this program is also determined by income and asset guidelines.

Individuals having incomes less than \$22,116 annually or \$1,843 monthly with assets totaling no more than \$16,660 (not including car and home).

Married couples living together having incomes less than \$29,820 annually or \$2,485 monthly with assets totaling less than \$33,240 (not including car and home).

Qualification for either Low Income Subsidy or Partial Medicaid offer several benefits including co-pays of \$4.15 for generic medications and \$10.35 for brand name medications. These co-pays are for 30-day supplies.

If your income is above these guide lines you may have other options.

Some specialty medications or medications that do not have generic equivalents, are very expensive even using a Part D plan.

If you take one of those medications, investigate Patient Assistance Programs (PAP). PAPs are programs offered by the manufacturer of a medication. These programs require an application and usually documentation from a provider regarding your treatment plan but can offer significant savings to beneficiaries.

Most PAPs are income based but because of the expense of the medications, but the income and asset guidelines are often significantly higher than Medicaid or LIS programs.

Volunteers Assisting Seniors (VAS) can help you investigate the options which may be available to you. Call their office at 402-444-6617 for more information.

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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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Editor.....Ron Petersen
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ENOA Board of Governors: Mary Ann Borgeson, Douglas County, chairperson; Angi Burmeister, Sarpy County, vice-chairperson; Lisa Kramer, Washington County, secretary; Pat Tawney, Dodge County, & John Winkler, Cass County.

The New Horizons and the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging provide services without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, or age.

An accessibility solution to make stairs safer

Getting up and down your stairs can be easily accomplished with a stairlift. It will allow you to take control of your stairs, giving your family members peace of mind and giving you a greater sense of independence in the home you love.

A stairlift is a piece of assistive technology, consisting of a chair that carries you safely up and down stairs, on a rail that is secured to your stair treads.

Stairlifts prevent falls, help avoid tripping hazards and remove the significant barrier of the stairs, so you can enjoy the full use of your home.

- **Does a stair lift take up much space?**
Stairlift brands that have vertical rail allows a stairlift to be installed close to the wall. That means there is maximum free space on the stairs for other family members.
- **How is a stairlift powered?**
Stair lifts are generally battery operated and work even during a power outage. They only require a standard wall outlet to accommodate the continuous charge battery.
- **How much does a stairlift cost?**
New straight and curved

stairlift prices vary depending on factors including the stairway configuration, length of stairway, type of stairlift and power options.

- **Is a stair lift easily removed?**
Generally stairlifts can be easily removed if you are moving or no longer need it, often with little evidence the chairlift was ever there. Stair lifts are installed onto the stair treads, not the wall. No structural modifications are needed.
- **Is stairlift financing available?**
Stairlifts are a great option to avoid the cost of remodeling or moving. Stair lifts are not covered under health insurance or Medicare; however, many stairlift dealers offer financing plans.
- **Is there grease or gears exposed?**
Bruno stairlifts feature a sleek vertical rail with a covered gear rack, you don't need to worry about exposed grease attracting dirt, pet fur or children's fingers. There are other brands of stairlifts that don't require

grease, but the gears are exposed, so things such as pet fur can get caught in the gears.

- **Are used stairlifts an option?**
Yes, but I would recommend only having a used stairlift installed by a certified dealer. Most dealers will not install a used stairlift if it's over 5 years old.
- **Are rental stairlifts an option?**
Experienced stair lift dealers will rent a stairlift, but keep in mind there will likely be an install fee. Usually, arrangement can be made if the rental can be turned into a purchase.

A few popular styles of stair lifts:

- **Elan Stair Lift:** The most popular American-made straight stairlift. Bruno's Elan is a mix of stylish design, high-quality functionality and ease-of-use operation.
- With a narrow vertical rail design, Bruno's Elan stairlift leaves plenty of open space on the steps for family members. 300 lb Lift Capacity (136 kg) | Limited

Lifetime Warranty | Made in USA.

- **Elite Curved Stair Lift:** Stair lift built specifically for your home. The Bruno Elite Curved stair lift delivers an unmatched smooth, quiet ride from start to finish.
- With Bruno's signature stair lift, the quality and comfort are second to none. Add power options to further customize your Elite curved chair lift to fit your lifestyle. 400 lb Lift Capacity (190 kg) | 5-Year Limited Warranty | Made in USA.
- **Elite Stair Lift:** Quality, comfort and style with an Elite stair lift. The Bruno Elite stair lift offers worry-free access and a premium design that seamlessly blends into your home's environment.
- Consider options such as power swivel seat and power folding footrest to customize your Elite stair lift to match your unique situation. 400 lb Lift Capacity (190 kg) | Limited Lifetime Warranty | Made in USA.

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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, chair volleyball, chair Zumba, cornhole, and bingo, this month for the following:

- **April 5:** "ENOA" Presentation @ 11:45 p.m.
- **April 12:** "Prospect Cemetary" Presentation by Stan Baumann @ 11:45 a.m.
- **April 14:** Performance by "Woody Strohmeyer" from Merrymakers @ 11:45 a.m.
- **April 17:** "Benson Plant Rescue" Presentation by Dr. D @ 11:45 a.m.
- **April 19:** Craft Class – "Decoupage Flower Pots" @ 12:30 p.m.
- **April 24:** Mental Health Presentation @ 11:45 a.m.

Every Monday – Walking Club @ 10 a.m. & Manipulation Card Game @ 10 a.m.

Friday Bingo is played the first and last Fridays at 12:30 p.m. – Special "fill" prize.

Lunch is served weekdays at 11:30 a.m. A \$4.25 contribution is requested.

Reservations are due a day in advance, can be made by calling 402-444-3091.

For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or barbara.white@cityofomaha.org.

Eclectic Book Review Club

The Eclectic Book Review Club, founded in 1949, is announcing its spring 2023 schedule of author appearances. Each event includes readings and discussion by the noted book's author.

The monthly meetings, which include lunch and the author book review, are held at noon at The Field Club of Omaha, 3615 Woolworth. The cost is \$16 per person per month.

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

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

Authors for spring 2023 include:

- April 18- John Price. All is Leaf: Essays and Transformations
- May 16- Timothy Schaffert. The Perfume Thief

A healthier and happier you, just doesn't happen

"Becoming a healthier and happier you doesn't just happen. Your goals should be an expression of your strengths – a reflection of what matters to you, not a punishment or means of negative discipline." -Gallop Clifton Strengths.

If 2022 knocked you down, like it did our family, let's make a plan together to find more joy in 2023. Throw out the Auld Lang Syne and change things up. It's time to celebrate our strengths and talents and spend less time focusing on our weaknesses and many downfalls.

Finding personal joy and happiness can be daunting. We are not perfect. We may lose our temper, work too many hours, over commit, eat too many cookies and not enough vegetables. We may drink too much, smoke too much, argue and pout.

But, by continuing to expand our strengths and talents, we minimize the

amount of time we spend thinking about our weaknesses and how we failed not only ourselves but others.

Summer is just around the corner, and we have a lot of work to do, so let's get started.

Step No. 1: Set yourself up for success by listing all of your strengths and talents.

Think about what makes you unique, memorable, what makes you who you are. Do you make people laugh? Are you a reliable and dedicated employee? Do you invest time in others?

Step No. 2: Celebrate who you are. Yes, we all have things we would like to change about ourselves, but why dwell on them when you can redirect negative thoughts and enhance our strengths and talents?

Step No. 3: Be intentional about becoming a happier and healthier person. Participate in activities and

events that bring you joy, a feeling of purpose and gratitude, that rebuilds your energy, makes a difference, and helps you feel alive.

Hang out with loved ones and friends who bring out the best of you. Be mindful and engaged and invest time in you.

Step No. 4: Take one day at a time and ask yourself:

- What brings me joy?
- What is important to me?
- What can I change to become the person I want to become?
- What can I do for others in my life to bring them joy?

It's time to find more joy.

Submitted by Karen Rehm, Wellness Services Manager, Nebraska Safety Council. To schedule a "Healthier & Happier You" presentation, contact Karen at 402-483-2511 ext. 102 or send an email to Krehm@nesafetycouncil.org.

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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Please see the ad on page 3

New Horizons Club gains new members

\$25

Linda Moore
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Terry and Charlotte Abram

\$20

Virgil Janecek
Mary Taylor

\$15

Scott Vala

\$10

Louis Methe
Marjorie Shade

\$5

Irene Kazakevicius
C. Braun
Jude and Judy Gardner
Kathleen Koons

Area Tax-Aide

Tax-Aide volunteers are located across Nebraska and are trained and IRS-certified every year to make sure they know about and understand the latest changes and additions to the tax code.

You may request online or over the phone assistance with your taxes – a great option if there is no Tax-Aide site in your community.

To get started, go online – you need to find a location close to you or that you can get to by either typing in county, zip code or your address, and once you locate a site, click in to the site – and then you will need to go through their calendar to choose an open time slot and register for it.

You may also call 211, United Way Information Line, or 1-888-227-7669. Your local library may also be able to help you set up an appointment.



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OF NEBRASKA

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- POAs

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

*Central time zone



Why “What Matters” should accompany your health care

Modern medicine is wonderful and focuses on keeping people alive for as long as possible using what can be dramatic treatments and procedures. We all can expect an increasing number of health conditions as we grow older. As we have more health problems, people can find what their doctors expect them to do can be a burden and can even worsen their quality of life.

“Doctors and patients are re-thinking how to make health care decisions. We are finding that understanding an individual patient’s goals helps us provide better care. Health care goals are a personal thing and as doctors we need to keep a patient’s personal health-care goals in mind,” said Jane F. Potter MD of UNMC and Nebraska Medicine.

You can set your personal health goals by considering “What Matters” most to you. What brings you joy, what things are important? What could you not live without? Tell your provider “What Matters” most to you and discuss any new or ongoing treatments that make it harder to achieve those goals.

“During my 40+ years in geriatric (old age) medicine there has been an explosion in new medical information on the care of older adults, how to improve or maintain their quality of life,” said Dr. Potter. “A bunch of smart people including, doctors, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, therapists and others got together and determined what the research was telling us and how best to deliver health care for older people, we call these the 4Ms.”

The 4Ms (what Matters, Medication, Mind, and Mobility) are designed to help older adults and providers work together to support better overall health. Caregivers are an important part of older adults’ care. You can support a loved one’s health by learning more about the 4Ms and how to use them during healthcare visits.

Older adults should learn how to improve their health by learning about the 4 Ms. They are:

WHAT MATTERS

What Matters is the overarching M. It includes goals, values, and what is most important in older adults’ lives. It is important to think about what healthcare providers recommend and how it affects your loved one’s life.

You may want to ask questions about how a new diagnosis changes daily life. Maybe you want to help your loved one understand how they can enjoy a new diet during family gatherings.

When a caregiver heard about the 4Ms she commented, “I’m the main caregiver for my mom, who has dementia. I wouldn’t have it any other way. I work full time, so it would work best to have one person coordinating mom’s care.”

MEDICATION

A visit with a healthcare provider is the perfect time to discuss medications. Help your loved one discuss which medications are necessary or which may cause uncomfortable side effects. An older person when hearing that medication was one of the 4Ms said, “When my doctor recommends a new drug, I ask “Why should I take this? What are the side effects? How does it interact with my other medicines?”

MIND

Every year, your loved one should get screened for dementia and depression. Take the time to discuss any changes in mood, memory, or motivation. Considering screening for depression, an older person stated, “My generation may not like to talk about depression, but still we must. Depression is not a normal part of aging. It’s treatable.”

MOBILITY

Staying physically active is important for you loved one’s health. Talk with their provider about an exercise plan that works for your or your loved one’s life. Explore the home and identify where rugs or missing handrails could be a fall hazard. Thinking about mobility another person said, “What matters to me? My independence. I’d like to stay in my own home as long as possible.” “The other thing to know is that the 4Ms are a set,” Dr. Potter said. “They all work together. Medications that make someone dizzy may cause them to lose mobility, maybe to the point that they are no longer safe at home. If the goal is to stay at home, that medication is interfering with what matters. If your provider knows that staying home is what matters, they can work with you to treat you another way.”

The Nebraska Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (NGWEP – or Nebraska GWEP) is funded by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and aims to improve the healthcare and healthcare outcomes of Nebraska’s older population by educating teams of primary care of providers, patients, their families and caregivers. ENOA is a key partner in all elements of the project.

Wind Symphony presents ‘Tribute’

Join the Nebraska Wind Symphony on April 16 for its final concert of the regular 2022-2023 season, titled “Tribute.” During the concert, the Nebraska Wind Symphony will celebrate the founder of the Nebraska Wind Symphony, Darwin “Tony” Snyder, who passed away on January 2nd, 2023 at the age of 98. In addition to works from the very first concert of the Nebraska Wind Symphony, the program will be selected from the following repertoire: Psalm 74 by Brooke Pierson (Consortium Premiere); Adoration by Florence Price; Delta Work

Song: Spiritual and Dance by William Grant Still; Concerto in D Major: Finale op. 283 by Carl Reinecke (performed by Paige Michaud, NWS Memorial Scholarship Competition Winner); and The Cowboys by John Williams. Tickets are \$10 for seniors, \$15 for adults.

The importance of strength training with age

By Libby Guenther

As we age, we start to notice that it can become more challenging to perform certain activities that used to be easy – standing up out of a chair, going up or down stairs, carrying a bag of groceries. One major reason for this decrease in functional ability is sarcopenia. Sarcopenia is age-related loss of muscle mass and strength. Muscle mass and strength develop steadily from birth to around 30 years of age.

After the age of 30 muscle mass can begin to decrease approximately 3-8% per decade and can continue to decrease closer to 8% after about 60 years of age. This decrease in muscle mass may also contribute to an increase in fat mass, changes in body composition, increase insulin resistance, decrease bone density, joint stiffness and other conditions that may have implications for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis.

While there are multiple uncontrollable physiological mechanisms that occur with age that can lead to sarcopenia, there are a few contributors that can slow the loss of muscle mass. One of the best ways to combat loss of muscle mass with aging is physical activity, specifically strength training (also referred to as resistance or weight training).

Strength training is any exercise that causes muscles to contract against an external resistance with the goal of increasing strength. Current exercise guidelines, from the American College of Sports Medicine, recom-

mend a minimum of 150 minutes of aerobic physical activity (walking, biking, household chores) per week plus two days of strength specific training per week. As of December 2022, 75% of adults (aged 18 and older) did not meet the recommended guidelines for both aerobic and strength training.

This may sound disheartening that not only are our bodies naturally inclined to lose muscle mass as we age but most of us are not doing what we can to combat or minimize this loss of muscle mass.

However, with a little bit of effort we can set ourselves up to age with strength! Research has shown that progressive strength training does induce muscle growth and increased strength in older and frail adults. Aged muscle is still very adaptable and able to respond to strength training by increasing and/or maintaining mass and strength.

There are many ways to partake in strength training programs. Some activities that you already perform around your home may count as strength training: carrying grocery bags, vigorous yard work or house cleaning, moving boxes or furniture. However, participating in a focused strength training program may provide more benefit.

Some easy ways to add more focused strength training to your daily activities are: Performing exercises at home with hand/ankle weights or resistance bands, taking yoga or pilates classes that require you to hold your body in strong positions, or joining a fitness center

that has strength machines or free weights. As previously stated, current exercise guidelines recommend 2 days of strength training per week.

These strength training sessions should include exercises that target the major muscle groups. This means, choosing 8-10 total exercises that focus on strengthening the whole body (arms, chest, shoulders, back, front of legs, back of legs and core).

These exercises could include chair stands or squats, pushups or chest press, seated leg lifts, overhead press, laying or seated crunches, bent over rows, step ups, biceps curls and triceps press. Each exercise should be performed for 1-2 sets of 8-12 repetitions and with weight that feels challenging.

It is very important to remember to progress an exercise program to continue to build strength and maintain muscle mass.

This can be done by increasing the amount of weight being lifted (once current weight feels too easy) or increasing the sets or repetitions being performed (up to 2-3 sets and 12-15 repetitions).

In addition to maintaining or increasing muscular strength, strength training has a positive effect on many other areas of health and lifestyle:

- Develop strong bones and decrease the risk of osteoporosis.
 - Manage weight through weight loss or weight maintenance.
 - Enhance quality of life by improving ability to do everyday activities and maintain independence.
 - Reduce symptoms of other chronic conditions: arthritis, back pain, depression, heart disease.
 - Maintain cognitive abilities and improve the ability to learn new skills.
- Before beginning any exercise program, it is important to first talk to your

physician to get clearance to exercise. While many of these strength training exercises can be done at home, some people find it beneficial to join a fitness center.

Fitness centers often offer personal training or the guidance of a wellness specialist.

These professionals can provide in-depth and personal guidance on a strength program to ensure proper form, technique, decrease risk of injury and to help you maintain muscle mass, build strength, and prolong independence.

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.

- Nebraskans age 60 and older.
- Nebraskans of all ages with disabilities.
- Serving the populations of Dodge, Washington, Sarpy, Cass, and Douglas.

In Eastern Nebraska, you can contact
ADRC at 402-444-6536,
(toll free) 1-844-843-6364
or **adrcnebraska.org**

Intercultural Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Intercultural Senior Center (ISC), 5545 Center St.

The Intercultural Senior Center facility – open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – offers programs and activities from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The ISC offers light breakfast, lunch, fitness, language classes, crafts, technology classes, health presentations, and more.

Merrymakers presents Tim Clark, on April 21st at 12:30 p.m.

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.

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



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



COURTESY PHOTO

Artisan Commons is a shopping and retail center located in Bellevue. The primary focus is to provide a meaningful and educational environment for the people that are supported at Duet, a Developmental Disability Service Provider.

--DUET continued from page 1.
Meister, a retail coach at Artisans.
Rotolo said there is always something for someone to do at Artisans.
“We’re either busy with products, or busy with customers,” Rotolo said.
Donations can be dropped off at the store Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. If you can’t make it to the store, or the item may be too big for you to bring in, Artisan employees can set up a time to

come pick it up from you.
The store is open Wednesday – Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. and the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. – noon.
Artisan Commons is located at 410 Galvin Rd North, Bellevue, NE 68005. You can find more information by visiting the store’s Facebook page bit.ly/3wpGToz or by calling 531-466-7345.
To learn more about Duet’s mission visit duetne.org.



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

The Omaha Public Library, was founded in 1857. Check out the Omaha Public Library website for hours and more information on each location.

--Library continued from page 1.
& Magazines and Online Learning.
There are also featured resources for people to have online access.
“This year we started an online streaming service for video called Kanopy. You can use the library card to get in,” Steiner said. “There is so many more courses in there and they can browse those courses online.”
Not only is there a place to go for helpful resources or services, but the Omaha Public Library offers a place for people to gather.
“Libraries are so essential to the community because it’s the one place in the community people can go for good, reliable, free information. Libraries are here for curating information and connecting people to resources. A lot of people think of a library as a place for people who don’t have internet at home or people who don’t have the ability to buy a book themselves. But the truth is that it’s really a civic place,” Steiner said. “It’s a civic place to grow civic minded people. People need to realize that they are a part of a greater community and people need to realize that everybody in that community is connected in some way, and that by supporting each other will help grow the community.”
The Omaha Public Library currently has 13 locations around Douglas County. The Omaha Public Library is opened Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays the Millard Branch, Genealogy & Local History Room, Interim Branch and the Milton R. Abrams Branch is open from 1-5 p.m.
To learn more about the Omaha Public Library, visit their website at omahalibrary.org.



Patel et al. (2019). Symptom burden among community-dwelling older in the United States. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 67(2), 22

9TH BIENNIAL
Aging with Passion & Purpose
Conference
AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
May 05, 2023
9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. (CST)
Save the date!

Learners will discover collaborative approaches and techniques for assisting and supporting communities, policies, services, settings, and structures and developing livable spaces for people of all ages and abilities.

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

- Jeff Ahl, arCUREtecture
- Ashton Applewhite, Anti-Ageism Activist
- Shannon Guzman, AARP
- Roger O'Sullivan, Institute of Public Health in Ireland
- Anthony Warrior, Nebraska Indian Community College
- Steven Wengel, University of Nebraska Medical Center

Target audience: older adults and their families, friends, and care partners as well as multidisciplinary providers of care, researchers, and educators. Delivered virtually. Includes CEUs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
unoaging@unomaha.edu

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Ralston Senior Center

You’re invited to visit the Ralston Senior Center, 7301 Q St., Suite 100 this month for the following:
• **April 5, 8, 19 & 26:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
• **April 7, 21, 24 & 28:** Double deck @ 9:30 a.m.
• **April 12:** Board meeting @ 10 a.m.
• **April 12:** Book club @ 1:30 p.m.
• **April 13:** Bingo @ 1 p.m.
• **April 26:** The Merrymakers present music by Mark Sanford @ noon
• **April 27:** Bingo @ 1 p.m.
Lunch is catered in on Wednesdays @ 11:30 a.m. A \$5 contribution is normally suggested for the meal. Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday. Play games and bingo after lunch. Contact Diane @ 402-885-8895 for reservations.

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

The Ralston Senior Center will host a double deck pinochle every Friday from 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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

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

The center may be used on weekends for various activities such as weddings, memorial services, anniversaries, family reunions, birthdays, baby showers, wedding showers, etc.

For more information, please call Darla @ 402-651-5009 or 402-331-1529.

ENOA ending Rural Transportation Program

By Ron Petersen

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) is ending its Rural Transportation program. The program that provides transportation to residents in Washington, Dodge and Cass counties, plus limited rural areas in Sarpy and Douglas will end on June 30.

“Our Department of Transportation grant is expiring, and we have decided with the support of our Governing Board to not renew our application for the next fiscal year. This was not an easy decision to make as



we all know there is a lack of affordable transportation options within our communities. Running a transportation program is quite costly,” Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Executive Director, Trish Bergman said. “The grant’s federal

and state funding reimburses a large portion of expenses. As part of the grant requirements, however, ENOA must also fund a portion of the expenses. With the continued rise in fuel costs, insurance, maintenance and repair costs, ENOA’s por-

tion has increased each year.

“This grant program is considered public transportation, which means that ENOA is required to schedule rides on a first-come, first-serve basis, to whoever, to go wherever within the Rural Transportation Program boundaries,” Bergman said. “While we encourage older and disabled adults to use this service, there is never a guarantee there will be an open slot for them.

“ENOA has decided to reallocate the funds we currently use for the Rural Transportation Program back into our other ENOA

programs,” Bergman said. “With the increase in our older population, more individuals will need assistance with their basic needs. We feel we need to prioritize our funding towards Meals on Wheels program, in-home and caregiver services.”

ENOA’s Information and Assistance Division maintains a listing of transportation services available within the communities ENOA serves. ENOA’s listing is updated regularly and can be found by calling 402-444-6444 or found on the website, www.enoa.org.

Community Transportation Resources

This list of resources was compiled by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging. It is not a recommendation for any one of the providers listed below. This is also not a complete listing of all the transportation options available. Please call each provider to confirm details.

Provider information is subject to change without notice. Call directly to check service area and rates.

• **Beautiful Life Medical Transportation – 402-933-0978:** Offers Medical and non-medical transportation. Hours of operation: Mon-Sat. 8-9 a.m.; Sun 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

• **Blair Blue Community Transportation, LLC – 402-533-1133:** Operates in Washington County and surrounding areas. Hours are generally Mon-Sat. 6 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sunday Noon-8 p.m. Call for rates or to schedule a ride.

• **Camelot Transportation-888-452-3194:** Monday-Friday, 24-hour service. Logistically placed drivers throughout the State of Nebraska that offer non-emergency passenger services for travel anywhere that begins and ends in Nebraska. Prefer 24-hour notice. Call for rates. www.camelottransportation.net.

• **Care-A-Van-402-359-8634:** Provides free transportation for elderly and disabled residents who live west of the Elkhorn River in Douglas County. This includes the City of Valley and the Village of Waterloo and the surrounding areas. Rides are provided individually for medical appointments and by group for shopping and special outings. Drivers are all volunteers.

• **City of Bellevue Specialized Transportation Services Unit-402-293-3138:** Must be resident of Bellevue. Provides transportation to those 60 or older or have a medical disability. Please make reservation 48 hours in advance. Space is limited. Office is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Call for rates. Trips to Omaha run at 8 a.m.,

10 a.m., and 12 p.m. The van operates within the following boundaries: as far west as 84th St., as far north as Dodge St., and approximately as far south as Platteview RD. Please call to complete a registration prior to starting. Escorts ride free if the name is provided when you make a reservation. Wheelchair lifts available on minibuses. Please be ready one hour prior to scheduled pickup time. First pickup is at 7 a.m., and last pickup is at 3 p.m.

• **Compassion Care Medical Transport -402-686-3348:** If medical transportation is needed, the doctor must clear the patient to utilize Compassion Care’s transport. Will not provide gurney transportation and no rider with IVs, tubes, etc. Patient must be able to walk to the vehicle or be in their own wheelchair or have their own walker. Wheelchair/Non-Wheelchair available.

Additional information
o Will transport to Council Bluffs, Fremont, Valley, all of Omaha, and Lincoln.

o May provide some assistance if the rider is unable to get from home to vehicle unassisted.

o At least 2 days in advance booking is needed.

• **DAV (Disabled American Vets)-402-995-3453:** Free transportation to and from VA hospital only. Will transport to other medical facilities if initiated by a VA doctor. The need for DAV transport is based primarily on a Veteran’s inability to pay for the cost of public transportation. Veterans are transported for scheduled appointments only. Available Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Closed on Federal holidays and in bad weather (same schedule as when schools are closed). Must be able to walk to and from the car/van unassisted (not wheelchair accessible). Serves primarily Omaha and Council Bluffs. May serve other areas (i.e. Gretna, Blair), but best to call to see if schedule permits.

• **Eastern Royal Medical Trans-**

port-1-800-696-1495: State to state non-emergency long distance medical transport. They use medically equipped vans to transports patients either lying flat or propped up. Must have a Minimum of 180 miles travel. Accepts no insurance.

• **FAMC (Fremont Area Medical Center)-402-721-1610:** Free transportation between FAMC and the patient’s residence, for those who cannot provide it for themselves. Scheduled through the department providing service. Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Bus service area includes towns located in Dodge County on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; and Arlington, Cedar Bluffs, and Valley on Tuesday and Thursday.

• **GoGo Grandparent (Uber For Older Adults especially if you do not have a Smart Phone):** 1-855-464-6872. Sign up is free at <https://gogograndparent.com/>.

• **Heritage Health Plan Members 2023** - For individuals receiving services through Department of Health and Human Services please call your provider number below to see if you qualify for the transportation benefit. Once you have been authorized for this benefit, call the same number to set up non-emergency medical transportation. Typically, requests must be called in at least 3 business days in advance.

Healthy Blue call ModivCare 1-844-531-3783 press 4 to schedule a ride. Nebraska Total Care call MTM -1-844-261-7834; press 1 and enter phone number. United Health Care - call ModivCare 1-833-583-5683 have your member ID number ready.

• **LaVista/Ralston Special Services Van-402-657-3550:** Service available for all senior residents (ages 60 and older) and all handicapped residents of La Vista and Ralston. Open M-Friday, 7 am-4:30 pm. Fares are \$1 each way in Zone 1 (within La Vista and Ralston and designated locations); \$3 each way for Zone 2 (outside La Vista and

Ralston city limits); \$10 each way for Zone 3 (outside city limits). Multiple stops are an additional \$1(Prices subject to change). Bus punch cards are available for \$30. (each punch is worth \$1). Tickets may be purchased from the van driver or at the LaVista Community Center. Checks or cash only. A two-business day notice is required, and space is limited. All passengers must fill out an application form prior to riding on bus. Call or see www.cityoflavista.org and click on “Senior Services,” to see van regulations, zone maps, and obtain the application form.

• **MedCare Mobility- 402-506-6506:** Non-emergency medical transportation. Is an approved Medicaid Transportation provider for any of the Heritage Health plan members; prior authorization required. (see above under Heritage Health Plan). Also provides private pay transportation.

• **Medics at Home-402-345-6666:** Services include emergency and non-emergency ambulance transport service, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They will determine what type of support transport you will need. Basic life support, advanced life support, neonatal transportation, critical care transportation, wheelchair transportation. Patient transport coordinators available 24 hours a day to arrange the most appropriate level of ambulance transportation for each patient. Wheelchair transportation is \$37 one way, \$71 round trip. More sophisticated transportation (medical) starts at \$440 + mileage. Call for further rate information. Does not provide transportation from a private residence.

• **Metro Senior Pass (Omaha City Bus)-402-341-0800:** half-fare rides are available for seniors (over the age of 65 years), disabled and/or anyone on Medicare. A 10-ride half-fare pass is \$6, and a 30-day half-fare pass is \$27.50, plus \$1.50
--Resources continued on page 10.

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.

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.

Call 402-731-7210 for more information.

Want to stay home, but can't do it alone?


Stay safely in your home AND make sure you get the care you need - with Immanuel Pathways. You will have a team of caregivers and someone to manage and coordinate ALL your services.

For complete program details call 402.991.0330 or visit Immanuel.com

Immanuel Pathways PACE®: Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly
PACE participants may be fully and personally liable for the costs of unauthorized or out-of-PACE program services. Emergency services are covered. Participants may disenroll at any time.


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ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Veteran Owned Business

--Resources continued from page 9.

shipping and handling. You must fill out an application to receive a Metro Senior Pass Identification card. You may call Metro Area Transit to get the application or go to the Metro Area Transit website and download the application at www.ometro.com. The ID card must be shown to the bus operator when you board the bus. Service available 7 days a week, except some holidays. You can purchase passes at Hy-Vee, Bakers grocery stores (specific locations listed on their website).

- **Midwest Medical Transport Company/ MedAir-1-800-562-3396:** Provides emergency transportation by state-of-the-art ambulances and non-emergency ambulance transportation by para-transit wheelchair vans.
- **Moby-402-341-0800/402-346-8779:** Transportation for individuals who live within ¾ mile of a fixed metropolitan bus line & have a disability or temporary health issue that prevents them from using the fixed route transportation. Application must be completed by client & signed by physician prior to riding. Applications located on the Omaha City Metro website www.ometro.com, under MOBY Paratransit. Provides wheelchair transportation, but riders must be able to get to the curb on their own. Need 24-hour notice. Reservations can be made up to 14 days in advance.
- **Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition, Inc - 402-346-0902:** Need 24-hour notice; transport for medical/dental related services. Eligibility – Native American. Clients may be asked for proof of tribal enrollment. More information is available online at <http://nuihc.com/transportation-services/>.
- **Oceans Drive Transportation – 531-213-2211:** Oceans Drive will transport people for routine or procedural doctor visits. Requires 48-hour-notice. We encourage people to verify with your doctor if this transportation is acceptable for any kind of procedural visit.
- **Ponca Express Metro Connecting Omaha to Sioux City and Omaha to Lincoln - 402-438-9224**
Curb side service on a first come first serve basis.
- Wednesday and Thursday Depart Lincoln at 8 a.m. – arrive in Omaha at 9:30, depart Omaha at 1pm and arrive in Lincoln at 2:30 p.m.
- Every other Thursday Depart Omaha at 8 am and arrive in Sioux City at 10 a.m., depart Sioux City at 2 p.m. and arrive in Omaha at 4 p.m.
- No service on Tribal and major holidays.
- **Papillion Special Services Van - 402-680-3970:** Bus service is primarily for the use of senior citizens and handicapped individuals. Service area includes residents inside Papillion city limits and Papillion SIDs contiguous to the city limits. Service runs Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 7:45 a.m.-2 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Need 24-hour notice, and space is limited. Punch tickets are \$10 and can be purchased in advance at the Papillion Recreation Department or from one of the drivers directly. A bus fare can also be paid to the driver each time the bus is used. Bus fare runs \$1 one way within city limits and \$2 one way outside city limits.
- **Raah Nissi Home Care Transportation - 402-401-2752:** Wheelchair/Non-wheelchair; Can schedule rides with 24 hr. advance notice but prefer 72 hours. No physical assistance out of the home.
- **Road to Recovery-American Cancer Society-402-393-5801:** This free service utilizes volunteer drivers who provide cancer patients transportation to and from their scheduled medical appointments. Road to Recovery is available on an “as needed” basis, after all other transportation options have been exhausted, and is available within Omaha city limits only. Need at least 3 business days' notice. Must be able to walk unassisted to the vehicle.
- **Seniors Helping Seniors (SHS)-402-331-3073:** Reasonable rates for seniors requiring transportation throughout Omaha and all of Sarpy County. Call to schedule. Additional service information available online. Vehicles can be either the clients or the providers. Will provide transportation after surgery on a case-by-case basis. SHS will go into a home to assist people to vehicle. SHS is available for last minute requests, but they prefer 24-hour notice, at least, for new clients, especially. Cannot serve persons confined to a wheelchair. www.seniorcaregreat-eromaha.com.
- **Share-a-Fare- 402-827-9814:** Cab subsidy program for residents of Greater Omaha area who are legally blind or whose

vision precludes them from driving. Must complete an application in advance; have a certifying agent complete the application. Certifying agents can be a healthcare provider, rehabilitation counselor, or vision care provider. Call to get application or go online to fill out the application and mail in. Certifying agents may also complete and submit the application online at <http://www.shareafare.org/application>. Once approved, you can purchase cab coupon books at a half-priced rate. The coupons can be used to pay all or part of an individual's cab fare and do not have an expiration date. To order, call 402-827-9814, or go online at to see pricing, payment options, and order at <http://www.shareafare.org/order>.

- **Superior Van & Mobility Handicap Van Rental:** Has a fleet of wheelchair vans to rent for short or long term. Contact their rental coordinator for more details. 1-844-648-7368.
- **VA Hospital Beneficiary Transportation Processing Office-402-995-4458:** Transport service for VA hospital. The Beneficiary Travel program provides eligible Veterans and other beneficiaries mileage reimbursement, common carrier (plane, train, bus, taxi, light rail etc.), or when medically indicated, “special mode” (ambulance, wheelchair van) transport for travel to and from VA health care, or VA authorized non-VA health care for which the Veteran is eligible. Veterans can call directly with transportation requests; prefer 5-day notice. Hours are Monday-Friday 5 a.m.-9 p.m. For full details, please go to website, https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vtp/beneficiary_travel.asp.
- **Wings of Love-402-571-1922:** Available Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Omaha Metro area. No wheelchair vans. Store or medical appointments. Need 24-48-hour notice. Will provide transportation to Medicaid approved recipients.
- **Z Trip Nebraska-402-292-2222:** offers a senior discount if over 65 years old. Specify that you are a senior when you call in. Call for rates. Operates Happy Cab, Yellow Cab, Checker Cab, Cornhusker Cab, and Safeway Cab Companies in Omaha. When you reserve a ride into the dispatch system, they may dispatch any one of the company's drivers to pick you up. <https://www.ztrip.com/nebraska/>.

Finding the right real estate professional when downsizing

The success or failure of selling a house and downsizing with minimal stress or hassles often depends on finding the right real estate professional to work with.

What I would recommend you not do, is to automatically work with an agent that is a close friend or family member. They may be a good choice, but do your due diligence before deciding to work with someone that may not be the best real estate profes-



Soucek professionals I'd like to discuss here are, one, a traditional real estate agent and two, home buying companies.

Most likely, everyone is familiar with real estate agents and have the perception that this is the only real estate "professional" that they would work with.

However, over the last several years, home buying companies, often called iBuyers, have made selling a house direct to a home buying company much more common.

Even traditional real estate brokerages like eXp Realty (and others) have iBuyer programs that utilize local home buyers to fulfill direct cash home buying services. Just to disclose, my company Home Downsizing Solutions is a cash home buying company for eXp Realty. These traditional real estate brokerages realize that home sellers want to be offered options other than the traditional way of selling a house. The real estate market of the last few years has encouraged many to either become real estate agents or "wannabe" home buyers.

REAL ESTATE AGENTS

If you're considering selling your house and downsizing, how do you find a great real estate agent?

First, I'd recommend finding an agent that has an SRES (Senior Real Estate Specialist) designation, or has otherwise worked with downsizing situations on a regular basis. Agents that regularly work with down-

sizing situations can be a valuable resource for this process.

This is important since individuals that want or need to downsize or move to senior living have their own unique needs and desires.

Any real estate agent that you consider working with should be well versed in:

- The different types of housing that best suits your current, as well as future needs.
- Provide basic information so that you are armed with what questions to ask about potential downsizing options.
- Be able to introduce you to financial specialists who can provide answers to questions you may have regarding your current finances as it relates to your future living arrangements.
- Be able to direct you to legal assistance which may be required, regarding both downsizing as it relates to your house as well as if you need estate or asset protection planning.

One of the most important items that an agent should be able to provide is the realistic value of your house, both in its present condition, as well as the potential value of your house if it needs repairs and updates.

Another characteristic that I would consider extremely important is if they are a Total Solutions Agent™. A Total Solutions Agent is a term I created to describe an agent that offers and educates sellers on the multiple ways there are to sell a house.

The vast majority of real estate agents will only discuss listing a house with sellers. They will typically talk down even discussing how a direct home buyer works, usually because they don't understand the benefits that sellers may find valuable.

HOME BUYING COMPANIES

Just like real estate agents, there are good, bad, and absolutely ugly home buying companies. Some of these are what are referred to as "wholesalers" which you will want to not just walk, but run away from.

As with agents, you will want to ensure the company has been in business for years, preferably at least

one full market cycle.

A good home buying company can help contact and coordinate other services such as move managers, moving companies, and senior placement agents so that the transition to a new home or apartment can be as stress and hassle free as possible.

To ensure that you are working with a "real," legitimate home buying company, there are a few tips I can provide here.

- Ensure the company is actually a cash home buying company and not a "wholesaler" that will just get a contract to purchase a house, then try to sell that contract, without the intent or ability to actually purchase your house.
- Check the company's Better Business Bureau and Google reviews.
- Check with the local title and closing company that the company said they use to ensure they can and will actually close on houses they have agreements to purchase.

Like a Total Solutions Agent, you want a home buying company to be able to educate you on the positives and negative aspects of the different ways a home owner can sell a house, not just push you to the one solution they offer.

I often, half-jokingly, let potential clients and customers know that I am both a licensed real estate agent as well as an experienced home buyer, so I'm not sure if that's a good thing or not. But, I always attempt to educate home sellers of the options they have, provide information on the multiple options, and provide the one that is best for that particular seller, for their unique situation.

Finding a great real estate professional isn't always easy if you want to sell a house and downsize, but it can be critical to providing you a stress and hassle free transition.

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.

King Crossword

ACROSS			channel	10 List-ending
1 Discoverer's	37 Calendar abbr.	abbr.		
4 Island near	38 Official flower	11 Bakery buy		
Java	of Chicago	19 Debtors' notes		
8 "Cheers" order	45 Cash advance	20 Pester		
12 Brooch	46 Manhattan	23 Rm. coolers		
13 Oodles	area	24 Sign before		
14 Plotting	47 Lennon's love	Virgo		
15 Swelled head	48 During	25 Lad		
16 Reed and	49 Nest setting	26 Pallid		
Rawls	50 Pep	27 Joplin tune		
17 "Hud" actress	51 Sandwich	28 Anger		
Patricia	shop	29 Debussy's "La		
18 Star of "NCIS:	52 Play area	—"		
Los Angeles"	53 Greek vowel	31 Ming, for one		
21 Klutz	DOWN		32 Kismet	
22 Singer Starr	1 Oil cartel	34 Reply (Abbr.)	35 Seconded	
23 Photo book	2 Lofty	36 "True Colors"	singer Lauper	
26 Witty one	3 — about	37 Different		
27 Crater part	(roughly)	38 Not naked		
30 Corp. kingpins	4 Fragrant wood	39 Abode		
31 24 hours	5 Unfriendly	40 Banister		
32 Cab cost	6 Noisy	41 Asta's feeder		
33 Sauce source	7 "Not a prob-	42 Relocate		
34 Novelist Rand	lem!"	43 Squad		
35 Avid	8 Energizer mas-	44 NYC gallery		
36 Anderson	cot			
Cooper's	9 Fencing sword			

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
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38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45					46					47		
48					49					50		
51					52					53		

This Month's Crossword Puzzle

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

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

Stairlift can save every dream home

When he was growing up Jude Gardner never thought he'd be able to live in a house like the one he currently owns. When health and medical issues made living in the two story home difficult, he made the decision he would find a



Phillips want to leave it?"

A stairlift was part of his solution.

Jude and his wife Judy weren't actually looking for another house at the time they moved into this one twenty two years ago. Jude laughed while he recounted that Judy and a girlfriend just decided to look at houses for fun one week when he was out of town on business. When he got back home she took him to see what she had found. Soon they were moving into the beautiful home he now calls his "Dream Home."

Over the years they've developed a deep love for their home, yard, and scenic neighborhood.

Recently they've

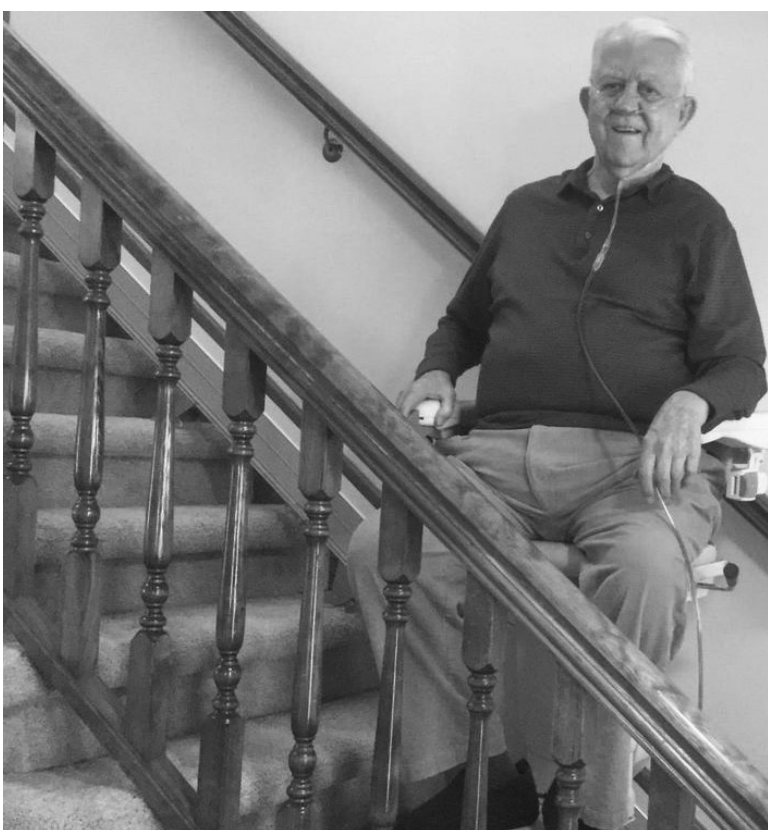
intentionally made changes to the two story home, in order to avoid moving. Jude describes the changes which range from grab bars to using services for maintenance and snow removal as upgrades. He has several health issues which combine to make climbing stairs difficult and unsafe. He started thinking about a stairlift in late 2020.

When it was installed in January of 2021, he loved it.

He quickly found that it made it possible for him to use both levels of his home fully. Their bedrooms and home office is upstairs and the rest of the living space is on the main floor.

Early on, it would have just been a lifestyle change to limit using the stairs as frequently as he needed to. Using the stairlift kept him from having to make that change then.

"Now I would have to convert a living room



PHILLIPS PHOTO

Jude Gardner uses the stairlift with ease.

to a bedroom or move somewhere else entirely if I didn't have the stairlift," he said.

An unexpected benefit of purchasing the stairlift for himself, is that his wife Judy who has recently experienced a more temporary problem is

also able to use the stairlift while she is recovering full mobility.

When he was doing his research about stairlifts, Jude visited the 101 Mobility showroom in Omaha and tried the models on display.

--Stairlift continued on page 13.

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SENIOR LIVING

IGO's annual Pops & Pie concert is set for April 30

Created by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) in 1985 and initially funded for two seasons by a grant from the



Peter Kiewit Foundation, the Intergeneration Orchestra of Omaha blends the talents of volunteer musicians ages 25 and younger with those ages 50 and older.

Metoyer Moten The IGO performs primarily for groups of retired older adults and area nursing home residents.

The 38th annual Pops & Pie concert – a fundraiser for the Intergeneration Orchestra of Omaha – is scheduled for Sunday, April 30 at the Jewish Community Center, 333 S 132nd St.

The guest artist will be vocalist, Camille Metoyer Moten.

Doors will open at 2 p.m. for the 3 p.m. performance.

At the door, tickets are \$10 or free for persons under age 6. Tickets are available by calling Chris Gillette at 402-444-6536, ext. 1021. Tickets may also be purchased at igoomaha.org.

--Stairlift continued from page 12.

He laughed as he said, "They answered about a million of my questions." As he demonstrated all the features of his stairlift, it was evident that he had gotten all the information he wanted and really knew how to make the best use of his stairlift.

Once he made his decision to purchase, he was pleased that scheduling and installation went quickly and smoothly. The track for the stairlift is mounted onto the steps and was accomplished in a matter of hours with no mess. Like most modern stairlifts, there is a control on the armrest as well as a remote. Since both Jude and Judy

are using the stairlift right now, they use the remote to call or send the stairlift as needed.

Jude uses a walker for balance and makes sure he has solid support when getting up and down. He pointed out that it was a simple thing to make sure that he has a walker available on both floors and to install a set of hand holds.

He also developed specific placement of his equipment and a routine to make sure he doesn't lose his balance or get tangled up in his oxygen cord while using the stairlift. With his system in place, it works smoothly every time.

Living in his dream home for as long as possible motivates Jude Gardner.

He considered quality of life and cost when thinking about other options and making small home modifications made a lot of sense in his situation. For him, living at home means being able to use the both floors of the house and the stairlift is a valuable tool that makes it possible.

If you have a success story to share or want additional information about specific solutions mentioned in this article, feel free to reach BevVan Phillips at bphillipsotr@gmail.com. BevVan Phillips is an Occupational Therapist with over 35 years experience helping people with home modifications and assistive technology.

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 24 hours of initial classroom training and 18 hours of additional training every two years.

The next Ombudsman training for volunteers will be June 20, 21, and 22.

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.

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 edbenett@unmc.edu or 402-559-5732 to find out more about respite services and to locate resources in your area.



Care Management Services

Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging



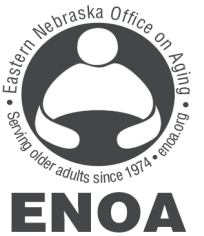
There's no place like home!
Are you age 60 or older and feeling like you might need some help?

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:
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Ask for **"Information and Assistance"**
for more details about Care Management services.



ENOA



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is reported

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April is National Parkinson’s Awareness Month

April has long been observed as Parkinson’s Awareness Month, as it is the birth month of James Parkinson, the London physician who was the first to describe Parkinson’s disease in 1817.

Parkinson’s Awareness Month is an opportunity to increase awareness about this disease and its symptoms, as well to offer support to those who suffer from it. The red tulip has been the global symbol of Parkinson’s disease (PD) since 2005.

“Parkinson’s disease

(PD) is a neurodegenerative disorder characterized by reduced amplitude of movement. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter that controls automatic muscle movements, either die or become impaired in the brain of persons with Parkinson’s disease,” Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders at University of Nebraska – Omaha (UNO), Lucia Scheffel said. “The lack of dopamine generates symptoms such as resting tremors, slowness of movement, stiffness of the arms, legs and trunk, poor bal-

ance and coordination, and speech difficulty.”

Discovering the right medications, therapies, support systems, and other ways to stay independent can enhance the quality of life for those with PD.

Food choices can impact both the health and comfort of the individual.

Emotional strength is just as important as physical health; learning ways to successfully navigate the many feelings associated with a PD diagnosis is vital.

There are many ways to maintain a good quality of

life when living with PD. Aerobic exercise helps build new pathways in the brain to replace those that were damaged, leading to the improvement of motor symptoms and possibly stemming the symptoms of PD.

At the UNO Speech and Language Clinic, they offer speech therapy using the SPEAK OUT! & LOUD Crowd program. A program that allows individuals from around the area to enhance their speech with the help of UNO’s speech therapists.

“We receive daily testimonials from both our

clients with PD and their families on how speech therapy is positively changing their lives and improving their communication skills,” Scheffel said.

A strong support network is essential for the wellbeing of those diagnosed with PD—and their network of caregivers.

Having a community of support can have notable benefits, including revitalized energy, renewed interest in creative endeavors, and the realization that there are others going through the same journey.

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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 phone number for the Elder Access Line is 402-827-5656 in Omaha and 1-800-527-7249 is the statewide number.

This Elder Access Line is available to Nebraskans ages 60 and older regardless of income, gender, race, or ethnicity.

The Elder Access Line hours of operation are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

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A	M	I	D		T	R	E	E		V	I	M
D	E	L	I		Y	A	R	D		E	T	A

This Month’s Crossword Answers

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

This Month’s Sudoku Answers

Remembering the qualities of a loved one

The sister of a dear friend of mine passed away recently. Ann was in her seventies and fought a long battle with blood disease. The celebration of her life was an inspiration.

Her qualities described at her funeral suggested a life well lived.

Ann loved life and would say so even amid blood transfusions and extreme fatigue.

“Life is good” was one of her mantras. She would often state that so many others had it so much worse than she did.

In truth, she did not have an easy life. She lost two adult children to death, a grief she carried throughout her life. Yet there was no hint of self-pity.

Her long illness would have sunk most people into deep depression, but not Ann. She kept choosing life right up until the end.

When I asked her sister why Ann

had such a positive perspective, she shared a few insights. Ann did not wallow in her difficulties and pain but always looked for what she could learn from the experience, ever becoming more compassionate. She gleaned wisdom from the hard times that she could share with others.

She avoided negative people and situations when possible. She detested gossip and would not enter into those kinds of conversations. Rather she looked for the good in others with compassion. She was non-judgmental, including all kinds of people in her circle of family and friends. In fact she had a wide circle of friends because she kept her mind open to all.

Ann also demonstrated generosity by giving to those in need, whether it be money, food, or other gifts.

Her other-centeredness was demon-

strated on her death bed when she made sure her visitors were getting something to eat.

Thinking about Ann and the testimonies at her funeral, I realize her life makes me want to be a better person.

Frequently funerals are times to celebrate the good qualities displayed by our loved ones. People do not have to be perfect in order to inspire us. Maybe it is time we look around to see qualities we want to imitate, even before death. Opening

Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

I have heard many sermons and talks meant to inspire me, some I may even have followed.

However, when all is said and done, there is nothing more inspirational than a life well lived. Ann would not have held herself up as a role model.

She simply lived her life the best she could and that was enough.

our eyes to the goodness of others may be our most compelling inspiration.

(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 nan-hemesath@gmail.com.)

Millard Senior Center

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

- **April 4:** May flower project @ 9 a.m.
 - **April 10:** THEOS (To Help Each Other Socially) @ 12:30 p.m.
 - **April 12:** Making sundresses and shorts to be sent to Haiti and to the Orphan Grain Train which serves all over the world @ 10 a.m.
 - **April 12:** Board Meeting @ 9 a.m.
 - **April 22:** Book Club: “Oath of Loyalty” by Kyle Mills led by Peg Bunger @ 1 p.m.
 - **April 27:** Basic crocheting @ 9:30 a.m.
- Mexican Train dominoes Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.
Hand-n-foot being led by Lee C Wednesdays @ 9 a.m.
MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.
For more information, please call 402-546-1270.

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, crafts, a variety of card games, quilting, tai chi, exercise classes, musical entertainment and various parties.

Please visit our website at cityoflavista.org/seniors for updated information or call 402-331-3455.

Tech Tip

It’s time for your digital spring cleaning. Follow these tips to help keep your devices speedy and responsive:

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ENOA

Recognizing National Volunteer Month

Delivering hot meals on a cold day, a special conversation between friends, helping a child learn how to read, shoveling snow from a driveway, making sure a long-term care facility resident is enjoying the best quality of life possible, and sewing blankets/quilts for residents and toddlers.

These are just a few examples of the important work being done in the community by the men, women, and children in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass, and Washington counties who volunteer in programs sponsored by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging.

Each year, ENOA's volunteers provide over 150,000 hours of service worth more than \$4.5 million.

In April, National Volunteer Month is being celebrated by ENOA and millions of Americans to thank the volunteers, recruit new men, women, and children into these vital programs, and encourage volunteerism throughout the United States.

"Collectively and individually, our volunteers are making a tremendous difference for more than 1,000 individuals in our region," said Mary Parker, director of ENOA's Volunteer Services division.

"Each day, our volunteers step back from their busy lives, generously offering their time to improve the quality of life for someone else. The value of their contributions is immeasurable, and we're truly grateful for these exemplary role models of service."

ENOA's Meals on Wheels program provides more than 200,000 hot meals to homebound older adults annually. Many of those mid-day meals are delivered by volunteers from the community and local businesses.

Additional volunteers are needed to deliver meals in various parts of the Omaha area. Drivers are contacted each Wednesday to see if they're available to help.

ENOA's Ombudsman Advocates visit area long-term care facilities and assisted living communities two hours each week to make sure the residents are safe and being cared for properly by the facility's staff.

Volunteers of all ages provide services designed to keep older adults living independently at home for as long as possible through ENOA's SeniorHelp program. These services include shopping for and delivering groceries, yard care, Meals on Wheels delivery, delivering bags of fresh produce, companionship, transportation, minor home repairs, indoor household assistance and snow shoveling.

Each December, Senior-Help volunteers deliver hundreds of holiday gifts to ENOA clients as part of the agency's Christmas program.

In addition, the SeniorHelp volunteers frequently donate to ENOA both monetarily and with requested items for special projects.



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

ENOA's Ombudsman Advocates visit area long-term care facilities and assisted living communities two hours each week to make sure the residents are living the best quality of life possible.

Funded by AmeriCorps Seniors, ENOA's Senior Companion Program (SCP) features volunteers who provide support and friendship to vulnerable, often isolated older adults in the clients' homes. Additionally, these volunteers provide transportation when needed and respite to care givers.

In January, the Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program, and the Alzheimer's Association partnered to collect and donate 960 pounds of food, along with a monetary value of \$1,897, and non-perishable food items to the food pantry at the Juan Diego Center in South Omaha, in honor of Martin Luther King Jr Day.

Also funded by AmeriCorps Seniors, the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) places volunteers in schools, Head Start programs, and child development centers to help youngsters needing special attention. Volunteers form meaningful

relationships with students and are positive mentors for them. Teachers and students benefit from having a consistent volunteer in the classroom that helps with school work or emotional development.

ENOA's Volunteer Connect Program matches older volunteers with private and non-profit agencies to provide volunteers in the community.

Volunteers create greeting cards of encouragement for residents of skilled care and assisted living facilities, individuals receiving Meals on Wheels and students of Boys Town.

Volunteers generously donate time and items they create.

Please join ENOA as it honors and recognizes these special men, women, and children during National Volunteer Month.

For more information about becoming an ENOA volunteer, please call Parker at 402-444-6536.



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO
Volunteers deliver Meals on Wheels to ENOA clients.