



Celebrating 50 Years

New Horizons

July 2025 | Vol. 50 | No. 7

John and Viv Ewing embark on new leadership path with his historic election as mayor

By Leo Adam Biga

With his historic May 13 election as Omaha's first Black mayor John Ewing Jr. ushered in "a new chapter" in the city he's always called home. A familiar face in local public service circles, he enjoyed a long career with the Omaha Police Department before becoming Douglas County Treasurer. He's been an Empowerment Network leader and prolific nonprofit board member. Wife Viv Ewing has been at his side on the campaign trail, on election night and in the community as his number one fan and adviser. Reaching the heights of city politics is just the latest accomplishment for this power couple who delight in each other's successes and do everything as a team.

As First Lady, Viv will have her husband's ear. "I have a lot of background to bring to bear however that might be needed," she said. "Yeah, I'll certainly be available for anything John might need. I'll make myself available to help in any way that I can providing any kind of sound advice that I can offer."



Mayor Ewing's chief of staff Thomas Warren, a lifetime friend and former OPD colleague, said the couple remind him of Barack and Michele Obama. "John is blessed to have such a successful confidante that will motivate and encourage him while providing him with the

love and support necessary in order for him to be able to thrive in such a high profile position."

A fellow Omaha native, Viv's filled executive roles in corporate and nonprofit spaces and has her own strategic consultancy. Together with their daughters, Christina and

Alexandria, both Omaha professionals who pitched in during the campaign, the tight-knit family form Team Ewing, whose strong bond is built on faith and service rooted in home and community.

"We really felt the effort was worth it for this community because this is home," said John. "We've always been committed to doing whatever we can to make home better. That's not to say Omaha's not a great place because I believe it is. But that's why we've stayed committed."

Said Viv. "That's absolutely right. We saw this as a community win across Omaha – north, south, east, west – because all sectors of the community that helped us get here."

Speaking to that broad-based consensus, Mayor Ewing said, "We are in this together."

A Democrat, his decisive (57 to 43 percent) victory over three-term incumbent Republican Jean Stothert made national news, for among other reasons, educating the country that there are Black people in

--Ewings continued on page 9.



The power of table tennis for older adults

Regular table tennis has beneficial effects on muscle strength, physical performance and body composition, and is a potent activity to improve health in older adults. Learn more about table tennis in Omaha on **Page 16.**

Senior centers plays an important role in Nebraska

By Ron Petersen

Senior centers, recognized by the Older Americans Act (OAA) as a community focal point, are one of the most widely used services among older adults in the United States. This is still the case today, while over a dozen senior centers serve more than 10,000 older adults in the Omaha metro area.

According to studies, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) said older adults who participate in senior center programs experience better psychological well-being across several measures compared to non-participants, including:

- Higher levels of health
- Increased social interaction
- Greater life satisfaction

Seventy-five percent of participants visit their center one to three times per week and spend an average of 3.3 hours per visit.

Research shows older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and

delay the onset of chronic disease and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental, and economic well-being.

"Senior centers are often tailored to meet the diverse needs of older adults, offering a welcoming environment where participants can thrive socially, physically, and emotionally," Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) Nutrition Services Division Director, Allison Adrian said. "People should go to senior centers for social interaction, health and wellness, educational opportunities, access to services, recreational activities, volunteer and leadership roles, mental and emotional well-being, affordable meals and respite for caregivers."

Senior centers connect older adults to vital community services that can help them stay healthy, active and independent.

One of the ENOA's participants --Senior Centers continued on page 4.

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Medicare does not cover long-term care after 100 days

This article is 5th in a Series on Long Term Care

The last article focused on ways to qualify for Medicaid to pay for Long Term Care (LTC).

At the opposite end of the spectrum are those who can afford to self-pay for their LTC with income, savings, and/or investments. In addition, they may be able to afford to purchase traditional LTC insurance via monthly premiums or roll over investments to a plan to help protect them if they're not sure if they have enough to pay for their longevity and they want to avoid Medicaid at all costs.

This article focuses on the majority who fall between the extremes of poor and affluent.

Those who have a modest amount of personal assets worth preserving but not enough to pay for long-term care services out of pocket. They can rollover some investments or afford the monthly premiums to buy a policy providing moderate coverage but not a full-bodied product with unlimited lifetime benefits.

They are not averse to applying for Medicaid if necessary, especially if they can preserve some if not all of their personal assets in the process.

A smart approach to use for those who are not able to fully fund their LTC are Partnership Programs.

The program's goal is to encourage consumers to purchase affordable long-term care insurance (LTCI) policies and to shift financial responsibility to Insurers and reduce the burden on state Medicaid programs. Partnership-qualified LTC policies generally have limited lifetime maximums; \$100,000 to \$300,000 is typical. In a partnership plan, the LTC policy helps with the self-pay requirements of most LTC facilities.

Long Term Care facilities typically require anywhere from 12 to 36 months of self-pay before they will accept Medicaid as payment. It can also make sense to match the policy's total benefits to the amount of assets the insured wants to pass on to heirs.

The key benefit is the applicant can keep assets equal to the policy's paid benefits. These assets are exempt from Medicaid estate re-



A non-government entity

coverly upon the insured's death. If the insured requires long-term care services, the LTC policy pays out its benefits. Then, if the insured continues to need care after the policy's benefits are exhausted (or the cost of his or her care exceeds the policy's benefit level), he or she can apply for Medicaid. However, the standard asset limit that the state Medicaid program would otherwise impose does not apply to the owner of an LTC partnership policy.

For example, if someone has a \$150,000 LTC partnership policy they can retain personal assets of \$150,000. Those assets would be protected against Medicaid's spend-down requirement. Only assets are protected; most of the income of the person receiving care still gets paid toward care.

For those who are concerned about the "use it or lose it" aspect of traditional LTC Insurance, here are 2 popular options:

HYBRID ANNUITIES

For many, a hybrid annuity may be a suitable option for LTC funding. Hybrid annuities are fixed single premium deferred annuities with long-term care insurance riders. These products are designed to provide a means to cover the cost of LTC insurance and to generate LTC benefits if that need arises; and to accumulate funds on a tax-deferred basis for any future purpose, if LTC is not needed.

For example, an individual who deposited \$100,000 in a hybrid annuity that grew by the time an LTC claim occurred would have \$300,000 to \$450,000 of long-term care coverage, depending on the multiple. Other product designs provide for an LTC fund equal to some multiple of the original premium deposit.

If long-term care is needed, the benefit is funded first through monthly payouts of the annuity's cash value. If the cash value

is depleted and care is still needed, then at that point, the LTC rider becomes operative and will continue to pay the same monthly amount for an extended period, such as 25 or 50 months.

If long-term care is not needed, the hybrid annuity operates like any other deferred annuity.

The owner can continue the contract as long as he or she wishes, earning tax-deferred interest, withdraw the contract's values and pay taxes on the earnings, or annuitize the contract, meaning to go ahead and convert the lump sum into a stream of payments.

Having the option to use the contract's funds for other than long-term care is one of the primary advantages of a hybrid annuity. It overcomes the concern many consumers have about purchasing a stand-alone LTC insurance policy: that long-term care will not be needed and that premiums paid for such coverage would be "wasted."

Hybrid annuities are typically issued with a waiting period (such as two years from the time the product is purchased) before benefits will be paid, as well as an elimination period (such as 90 days) once an LTC claim is filed.

Many hybrid annuities also offer optional inflation protection provisions.

HYBRID LIFE INSURANCE WITH LTC BENEFIT

Life insurance policies can include a long-term care benefit, either as part of the policy or as a rider. These "hybrid" policies provide for an advance on the policy's death benefit, payable tax-free, to cover long-term care costs while the insured is living. If the insured is certified as needing long-term care (i.e., he or she cannot perform two of the six specified activities of daily living), the benefit can be paid as a drawdown on the death benefit. The LTC benefit is typically defined as a percentage of the death benefit, paid monthly. For example, a \$100,000 life policy might provide for a monthly long-term care benefit of 3 percent. Accordingly, this policy would pay \$3,000 a month, up to 33.3 months, at which point the

--Medicaid continued on page 3.

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

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How can I safeguard in my everyday life

Do you frequently find yourself worrying about safety or the safety of loved ones? No matter what age, feeling secure within your surroundings is crucial to your well-being. After all, it's the second most important need on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

June marks National Safety Month, making it a great time to reflect on the environments you live, breathe, socialize, work and exist in every day. Read on to learn simple ways to prioritize safety and prevent catastrophes while doing so.

Home, sweet home can also be home, safe home. Start with the basics: test your fire alarm and carbon monoxide detectors, check for faulty outlets or electrical cords, and scout out any potential hazards like uneven steps or slippery flooring that could lead to falls.

Keep children and critters safe by storing cleaning products in accordance with the information on their labels — and if any accident happens, keep emergency

numbers handy for anyone in the home to access. It's also important to keep medications labeled and in a secure spot to avoid dosage errors or confusion. Don't forget to properly dispose of expired or unused meds.

The best workplace is a safe one. Whether your day involves sitting in an office or heavy lifting on a construction site, being aware of your company's emergency procedures sets you a step ahead if a disastrous situation were to occur. Office workers should routinely declutter their workspace to avoid fire hazards.

Take regular breaks to stand up, stretch and get a few steps in to help you avoid long-term health issues. On the other hand, manual workers — which can apply to anyone on their feet for hours at a time — should perform frequent self-evaluations on their current physical and mental state to avoid dehydration, overexertion, or other potential injuries that may stem from indifference or detachment on an active work site.

But how do you stay safe out in the big, unpredictable world? When it comes to safety in a public place, preparing for the trip at hand and staying alert to your surroundings is half the battle. With summer rolling around, remember to dress accordingly, stay indoors in extreme heat and travel with water in hand. Stay in touch with neighbors and local family members, whether you need them to assist you with shopping, help with the kids or pets, or to come to your aid in the time of crisis.

The community safety approach is incredibly helpful to keeping vulnerable populations like children, disabled and older adults safe. Once you finish your own home, workplace or neighborhood safety screenings, check in on your neighbors to see if they could use some help too. Having each other's back leads to a more welcoming, supportive and overall happier community.

This health tip is brought to you by Tabitha.

--Medicaid continued from page 2.

benefit would be exhausted. Any portion of the death benefit not paid out for long-term care would be payable as a death benefit to the insured's beneficiaries at the insured's death.

In summary, 70 percent of individuals over 65 will require some type of long-term care during their lifetimes. An LTC policy improves your chances of receiving care in the home verses having to go into a facility. If the time comes when you have to go into a facility, it is very difficult to find quality facilities that have open beds accepting Medicaid.

Most facilities require at least some period of self-pay before they will accept Medicaid as payment.

A hybrid policy funded with a lump sum now can exponentially increase the cover-

age you receive in the future and avoids the "use it or lose it" concern of traditional LTC insurance. Aging is inevitable. But facing it unprepared doesn't have to be.

Mary Hiatt is a Retirement & Insurance Advisor and President of Mary the Medicare Lady (A non-government entity.) She is Certified in Long Term Care Programs, Policies, & Partnerships and Annuities. She offers Educational Workshops on Medicare, Long Term Care and more at no charge. She works with reputable estate planning Attorneys to help her clients get Medicaid. Not connected with or endorsed by the U.S. government or the federal Medicare program. Medicare Supplement insurance plans are not connected with or endorsed by the U.S. government or the federal Medicare program.

Programs changing this month at AARP NE Information Center

By Tony Harris
AARP NE Information Center



The Kroc Center offers a variety of classes and programs for older adults and we will be joined by Janet Miller, the Kroc Center's Senior Life Specialist, who will tell us more about these amazing opportunities.

On July 26 at 1:30 p.m., anyone is invited to attend

the AARP Nebraska Information Center's monthly program, where you can learn more about the Salvation Army Kroc Center in Omaha.

Located at 1941 S 42nd St. in suite 220, the Information Center is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and

Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

If you are interested in becoming more involved, stop by the Information Center to learn more about the many opportunities to get involved in the community by becoming an AARP Nebraska volunteer.

For more information call the Information Center at 402-916-9309.

Make a donation to help support.

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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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ENOA Board of Governors: Mary Ann Borgeson, Douglas County, chairperson; Don Kelly, Sarpy County, vice-chairperson; Lisa Kramer, Washington County, secretary; Pat Tawney, Dodge County, & Taylor Boyle, Cass County.

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Life returns: Rising from the ashes in today's world

My heart was deeply touched by a line of poetry I heard recently. "They can crush a few flowers but cannot hold back the springtime."

This line was penned by Paolo Neruda, a poet who lived through the repression in Chile when hundreds of citizens were "disappeared" because of their political stance. People found courage by believing in "springtime." Over many years their country did reemerge as a non-repressive, democratic nation.

I see this metaphor of hope playing out in so many situations in our lives today. Whole neighborhoods have been crushed by violent winds or flooding, only to rise again through hard work in the months and years that follow. The archetype of the Phoenix arising from the ashes is often used to describe rebuilding after a major fire. Life returns.

Sometimes the crushing comes, not from nature's forces, but from what human beings do to one another. After the massacre of human life on the shores of France during WW II, the return of life was signaled and celebrated with fields of poppies.

All wars through history eventually end, allowing for rebuilding and more peaceful times.

Our own nation is experiencing and/or fears the crushing of flowers such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, food assistance, scientific research, and education. In the midst of the turmoil, it is often difficult

Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

to see what may arise in the form of springtime. Still history tells us all seasons are cyclical, and current chaos will yield to a renewing of life.

Personally, it helps me to take the long view of history and life itself. Because I believe in some form of life after death, my hope extends beyond this lifetime. Seeing my peers decline in health, as bodies wear out, is not to my liking. Yet I believe that the crushing of these flowers is not the end of the story. Springtime emerges in our children and grandchildren, in the good works we have contributed that last beyond our lifetime, and in whatever opens up as we pass through death.

In times of crushing difficulty, whether personal or societal, clinging to hope and trust in the springtime that is to come, enables us to live our lives in a spirit of hope and courage.

(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.)



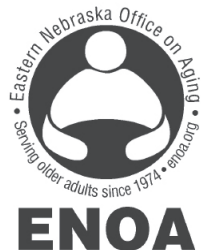
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- Do you have a comment about the agency and how it serves older adults in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass, and Washington counties?
- Do you have a story idea for the *New Horizons* newspaper, or would you like to receive a **FREE** copy each month?

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

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



--Senior Centers continued from page 2.

said participation in the senior centers takes isolation out of his life, and everyone gives each other hope when it comes to being around people who are the same age.

"After being widowed, I learned I can still contribute and show life still has meaning, both for me and others, regardless of age," James Kinney said.

More than 60% of senior centers are designated focal points, allowing older adults to access multiple services in one place.

Senior centers work in partnership with other community agencies, organizations and businesses to provide access to an array of opportunities for older adults to stay safe, active, and healthy.

"I've made many new friends and look forward to my twice-a-week visits," ENOA participant, Janet Schawang said. "Besides playing cards at the Camelot Senior Center, I take Tai Chi classes, which helps my balance. Playing card games have helped not only my focus, but also my mental and well-being overall. I'd be lost if some of those services weren't offered."

Senior centers offer a wide variety of programs and services, and they even serve as part of emergency response. Some programs and services in Nebraska include:

- Meal and nutrition programs
- Information and assistance
- Health, fitness, and wellness programs
- Public benefits counseling
- Employment assistance
- Volunteer and civic engagement opportunities
- Social and recreational activities
- Educational and arts programs
- Intergenerational programs

Senior centers are meant to offer opportunities for forming friendships, participating in activities, and accessing resources that empower seniors to live fulfilling lives.

"I look forward to having a safe and friendly place to come to each day, looking forward to a great day at the center," ENAO participant, Linda Schneider said. "The director and staff are dedicated to making everyone feel welcome and making the experience, fun safe and clean."

Today's senior centers are reinventing themselves to meet the needs and desires of three generations of older adults. Baby Boomers now constitute more than two-thirds of the 50+ population. Senior centers are developing new programs and opportunities for this dynamic generation of older adults and have an eye towards the future with the leading age of Generation X turning 60 in 2025.

"As Baby Boomers redefine aging, senior centers will transform into dynamic, adaptable spaces that reflect a new era of active, engaged, and empowered older adults," Adrian said. "The future of senior centers will likely evolve significantly to meet the changing needs, preferences, and expectations of the aging Baby Boomer generation."

For more information about senior centers in Omaha, visit ENOA's website at enoa.org.

"Senior centers have impacted my life in such a positive way," Schneider said. "It's a great place to socialize with others and it also positively impacts my physical and mental health. It has everything you need in one place. Nothing can replace this."

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Letting go, moving forward: Why every move is a metaphor for life

By Lesley Brandt
The Move Coordinators

Here's the truth about moving: It's messy. It's emotional. It's often overwhelming.

It's also one of life's greatest metaphors.

When we move, we're not simply changing our address. We're reflecting on where we've been, who we've become, and what truly matters. We're deciding what to carry forward—and what we're finally ready to let go of.

And that's no small task.

So, when it comes time to move, it often feels like more than packing boxes. It feels like unraveling a life.

And somehow, in the middle of the mess, something beautiful happens.

LETTING GO IS A FORM OF GROWTH

Our team has witnessed firsthand that as we age, our belongings often carry more profound meaning. They become extensions of our identity—symbols of our accomplishments, our relationships, our traditions. Letting go of them can feel like letting go of part of ourselves.

In truth, letting go is not forgetting; it is embracing. It's not giving up. It's making peace. It's choosing to honor the past while also making room for what's next.

You can't take everything with you.

You have to choose your favorites—

- what you need,
- what you use,
- what you love.

And then you step forward.

- Lighter.
- Stronger.
- More you.

THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE OF A MOVE

We don't talk enough about the emotional weight of moving. Especially for older adults, it's not just about logistics. It's about legacy.

According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, later adulthood is defined by the stage of ego integrity vs. despair. It's a time of reflection—looking back on one's life with either a sense of peace or regret. In that season, our belongings aren't just "stuff."

They represent stories, relationships, and identities. A kitchen table isn't simply a piece of furniture—it's where holidays happened, homework was done, and grandchildren gathered.

When someone is faced with the decision of what to keep or let go, they're often navigating deep emotional terrain. It's okay to grieve. It's okay to hesitate. And it's okay to feel the full weight of what that "old sweater," "dusty book," or "creaky chair" represents. And it's okay to move through shame or negative feelings for keeping something for so long.

We'll always start from where we are rather than where we think we should be.

This is all part of an emotional process. And every step needs to be honored.

THE GIFT OF REFLECTION

One of the unexpected blessings of moving is the opportunity to reflect. To pause. To ask:

Who have I been?

What have I loved?

What do I want this next chapter to look like?

There's power in answering those questions. There's clarity in choosing your next season with intention. And there's peace in knowing that you don't have to carry everything—you only need to take what matters.

We've watched clients come alive again in their new homes—not because the space is bigger or fancier, but because it holds meaning. The photos that made the cut? Their favorites. The dishes they kept? The ones they use. The furniture? Comfortable, functional, and surrounded by love.

That's not downsizing. That's right-sizing—your life, your space, your peace of mind.

MOVING FORWARD WITH GRACE

It's easy to focus on what you're leaving behind. But what if the real power is in where you're headed?

Yes, moving can be exhausting. Yes, it can stir up tears, tension, and fear. It can also bring unexpected joy. Relief. Even a sense of freedom.

When the dust settles, and you walk into a space that reflects the life you want to live now, there's often a vis-

ible shift. Shoulders drop. Breaths deepen. Smiles return.

Because you made them, you had to make hard choices. You honored the past. And you created space for something new.

That's not just a move.

That's transformation.

THE SILVER LINING

So if you're standing at the edge of a move—your own, or that of someone you love—take heart. Yes, it will be messy. Yes, there will be hard days. Yes, you will have the opportunity to rediscover what matters most.

You'll choose your favorites—

- what you need,
- what you use,
- what you love.

And you'll step forward.

• Lighter.

• Stronger.

• More you.

And maybe, just maybe, you'll realize that in letting go, you found something new.

La Vista Senior Center

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

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

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

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

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

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Thank you to the New Horizons Club members

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Millard Senior Center

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

- **July 2:** Board Meeting @ 9:45 a.m.
- **July 4:** Center is closed for 4th of July
- **July 9:** Sewing Club meet to make sun dresses and shorts at home that are donated and distributed to several countries @ 9:30 a.m.

- **July 16:** Annual Indoor Picnic
- **July 27:** Melodrama at Mahoney State Park @ 2 p.m.
- **July 28:** Book Club: "The Girl from Guernica" by Karen Robards @ 1 p.m.

Tai Chi on Mondays and Fridays @ 9:30 a.m.
Bingo every Tuesday and Friday @ 12 p.m.
Sportswear Fridays. Wear your favorite team attire every Friday.

Hand-N-Foot Wednesdays @ 8:30 a.m.

MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.

Chair Volleyball Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m.

Dominoes Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.

For more information, please call 402-546-1270.

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
1516 Jackson St.
Omaha, Neb. 68102**

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

Five Wishes assists with medical treatment, eases the burden on families

If you're unsure about a will or do not want to make medical decisions in the future, read the Five Wishes document to see how it can help.

The Five Wishes document is the first living will (also called an advance directive) that talks about your personal, emotional, and spiritual needs as well as your medical wishes. It lets you choose the person you want to make health care decisions for you if you are not able to make them for yourself.

"It's easy to understand," Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Medicaid Waiver Division Director, Janelle Cox said. "It's simplistic and it's not overwhelming."

For 12 years, Jim Towey worked closely with Mother Teresa, and, for one year, he lived in a hospice she ran in Washington, DC. Inspired by this first-hand experience, Mr. Towey sought a way for patients and their families to plan ahead and to cope with serious illness. The result is Five Wishes and the response to it has been overwhelming.

It has been featured on CNN and NBC's Today Show and in the pages of Time and Money magazines. Newspapers have called Five Wishes the first "living will with a heart and soul."

Today, Five Wishes is available in 31 languages.

Five Wishes allows you to say exactly how you wish to be treated if you get seriously ill.

It was written with the help of the nation's leading experts in end-of-life care. It's also easy to use and all you have to do is check a box, circle a direction, or write a few sentences.

"It provides the information and you get to make decisions," Cox said.

The Five Wishes document gives you a way to control something very important, how you are treated if you get seriously ill. It is an easy-to-complete form that lets you say exactly what you want.

Five Wishes lets you talk with your family and friends so they won't have to make hard choices about how you want to be treated without knowing your final wishes if you become seriously ill.

Five Wishes is for anyone 18 or older, married, single, parents, adult children, and friends. More than 42 million people of all ages have already used it. Because it works so well, lawyers, doctors, hospitals and hospices, faith communities, employers, and retiree groups are handing out the document.

People who use Five Wishes find that it helps them express all that they want and provides a helpful guide to family members, friends, care givers and doctors. Most doctors and health care professionals know they need to listen to your wishes no matter how you express them.

The five wishes include:

- The person I want to make care decisions for me when I can't
- The kind of medical treatment I want or don't want
- How comfortable I want to be
- How I want people to treat me
- What I want my loved ones to know

If you choose to complete a Five Wishes document, it will replace any previous advanced directive, once signed. Destroy old copies of advanced directives or clearly mark them as "revoked." Inform your health care agent, family, doctor and attorney (if applicable) that you have completed a new version to ensure your current wishes are followed.

Staying cool in the summer heat

**By Dr. Lindsay Huse,
Director of the Douglas
County Health
Department**

The Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) has the responsibility of promoting and protecting the health of everyone in Nebraska's most populous county.

Summer brings some special health concerns to Eastern Nebraska's aging population.

Here are some things to be aware of as you enjoy the summer:

- Heat-Related Illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Older adults are more susceptible due to their reduced ability to regulate body temperature. Some medications also may impair heat response. That also can lead to a

diminished thirst response, which in turn can lead to an increased risk of lightheadedness, falls, and a variety of serious medical issues.

Advice: Avoid being outdoors during the middle of the day when temperatures peak, take advantage of fans or air conditioning, and drink plenty of water.

- Exposure to sun raises concerns like increased skin cancer risks from cumulative lifetime exposure.

Possible skin reactions from certain medications are possible with sun exposure, and sunburn can cause greater damage than when a person is younger. It also takes longer to heal.

Advice: Use sunscreen with a broad spectrum such as SPF 30+, wear clothing to protect your skin as much as possible and avoid

direct exposure to the sun.

- Cognitive changes and mood changes from heat and dehydration may become worse.

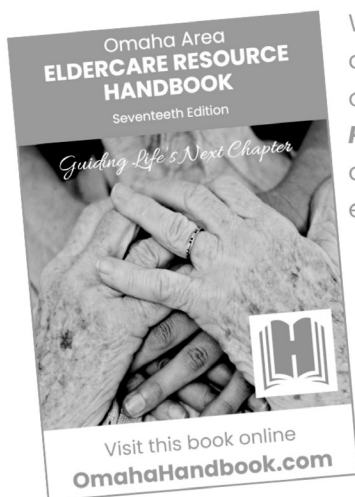
That can lead to confusion or dementia symptoms.

Even summer travel or a change in routines can lead to delirium or anxiety.

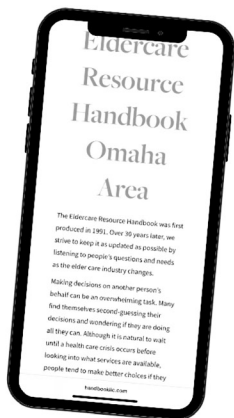
Advice: Keep routines stable, monitor hydration, and check your mental status regularly.

With that, DCHD encourages everyone to eat healthy foods and have a great summer.

The Douglas County Health Department's mission is to protect, promote, and prioritize the health of our entire community. The vision statement is a healthy, vibrant, and resilient community for everyone, everywhere.



We are thrilled to announce the 17th edition of the **Omaha Eldercare Resource Handbook**, a reliable guide to eldercare solutions!



Don't miss out on this valuable resource. Get a hard copy today or visit us online at OmahaHandbook.com.



CONTACT US

402-225-0328
Info@HandbookLLC.com

Eldercare Resource Handbook
11640 Arbor Street, Suite 203
Omaha, NE 68144

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:

- **July 2:** Music with Bill Chrastil @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 3:** Presentation with Nye @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 4:** Center is Closed for 4th of July
 - **July 7-11:** Closed for 4-H Fair/JCF Days
 - **July 16:** Music with Billy Troy @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 17:** Historical Society, May Museum @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 23:** Cinnamon Rolls from Nye Square @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **July 24:** Early Bird Bingo @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **July 24:** Music by Tim Javorsky provided by Merry Maker's @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 30:** Music with Johnny Johnson @ 10:30 a.m.
 - **July 31:** Early Bird Bingo @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **July 31:** Refreshments from Home Instead @ 9:15 a.m.
 - **July 31:** Presentation from Care Patrol @ 10:30 a.m.
- Craft class on Tuesday afternoons @ 1:30 p.m.
Tai Chi offered every Tuesday and Friday from 9:15-10 a.m.

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

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

Florence Senior Center

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Respite Across the Lifespan

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



Live Healthy

SPEND LESS
on your prescriptions

with the

FREE
Douglas
County

Prescription
Discount Card



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

AVERAGE SAVINGS OF 20%!

- No age requirements.
- No income requirements.
- Unlimited use for the whole family.
- No claim forms to fill out and no annual fee to pay.

This program is offered in a joint effort of Douglas County and the National Association of Counties (NACo).



For more information
call **1-877-321-2652**

or visit
nacorx.org

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

ENOA's Meals on Wheels driver brings energy, joy to community



COURTESY PHOTOS

Curtis Losee, a Meals on Wheels driver for the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA), dresses up during holidays when he delivers his meals on his regular meal routes. He said, "I believe it is fun to put smiles on people's faces. Older folks need a extra bit of joy in their daily life when ever they can. Just trying to make that happen."



Four simple tips to stay hydrated

By Laura O'Hara MS, RD/LD

As spring and summer approach and the weather begins to warm up, it is important to stay hydrated. The human body is made up of roughly 60% water, and it can be lost quickly through sweating due to exercise or high temperatures. When we lose water, we can quickly become dehydrated, and this can cause either mild symptoms such as headache, fatigue, and constipation, or more life-threatening conditions including heat stroke, urinary tract infections, or kidney failure. Staying hydrated is key for good health as it can help with digestion, maintain joint and kidney health, increase energy levels, support adequate brain function, and keep your skin glowing.

As we age, the percentage of water in the body tends to decrease below 60% due to a natural decrease in muscle mass. Due to this, staying hydrated becomes more important; however, it can often be challenging to stay hydrated as age increases. Some reasons for this are the natural weakening in thirst response and a decrease in appetite, along with a potential fear of nocturia, or frequently using the restroom in the middle of the night.

WAYS TO EAT YOUR WATER

Did you know that you can hydrate by not only drinking water, but also by eating certain foods? If you have trouble drinking enough fluids, try choosing these foods with high water content to help you stay hydrated.

- Cucumbers
- Watermelon
- Berries
- Melons
- Peaches
- Oranges
- Pineapple
- Apples

WAYS TO ADD TO YOUR WATER

Fluids that have a dehydrating effect include coffee and tea, and other beverages like soda, lemonade, fruit juices and sweet tea contain quite a bit of sugar, so it is best to stick with water as much as you can for adequate hydration. To keep your water cold, use an insulated water bottle. To

make drinking water more enjoyable, change up the flavor from time to time. Some of my personal favorite ways to consume water include adding:

- Lemon or lime juice
- Sugar-free flavored drink packages
- Electrolytes

UNDERSTANDING ELECTROLYTES

Speaking of electrolytes, are they safe to drink on a daily basis? The answer to this depends on a couple of factors. If you are prone to dehydration, exercise often, or sweat a lot after exercising, you may need to replenish your electrolytes. Electrolytes include sodium, potassium, and magnesium, and serve many functions including maintaining the balance between fluids inside and outside your cells and regulating nerve and muscle function. Electrolytes are found in common sports drinks like Gatorade or Pedialyte. These can be consumed for hydration, especially after sweating from exercise, or if dealing with an illness, specifically vomiting or diarrhea that can lead to dehydration; however, keep in mind that too many electrolytes in the body can cause an imbalance and lead to unwanted symptoms such as irregular heartbeat, muscle cramps, nausea, or diarrhea.

WAYS TO MAKE IT A HABIT

Drinking water is not a habit for everyone, so if it is not currently a habit for you, simply begin making it a part of your routine by making set points in your day to drink water. When you wake up, make it a goal to drink one glass, along with after each meal, with a snack, or before and after a physical activity. The easiest way to avoid dehydration is to keep water with you at all times. Whether you are running errands, relaxing on the couch, or going to sleep, it is best to keep water at your fingertips. Happy sipping, and happy spring.

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

--Ewings continued from page 1.

Nebraska. His win came on the eve of the biennial Native Omaha Days homecoming celebration that brings thousands back to be with family and friends. Its Black unity-in-the-community focus has legs well beyond the every-other-year observance.

"I'm excited this (election) happened now so that it ties into Native Omaha Days," he said. "Because this has been a national story I'm sure a whole lot of people from Omaha that live somewhere else have seen it. I want them to consider coming back to Omaha. We're a different Omaha maybe then when they left. I want us to get to work and get people to want to come back here and contribute great things."

The Ewings will leverage what they can together to make it happen, which is what they do no matter the event or initiative or issue they fix on.

Omaha native and national political strategist Rebekah Caruthers, who managed Ewing's failed 2012 Congressional campaign said, "Both of them are super achievers and super competitive. There's something in their DNA that drives them and it's really powerful seeing them paired together. They are each other's biggest motivators. They are a dynamic team. They genuinely value and respect each other and they are each other's biggest supporters."

Acknowledged Viv, "We do everything as a team when it comes to work in the community because we feel we're called to serve and to help make things better. That's a hallmark of what we've done. We want to make the community better, we want to improve lives, we want to make the city better, and ultimately make our state and country better."

"We have a really good relationship where we respect each other, support one another. Collectively when we work together on something there's a synergy that happens. We always approach a project or an initiative with the goal of excellence because we expect that of ourselves and we want that to be the outcome of the work that we do."

Said John, "Amazing things happen because of our close relationship. That allows us to be able to impact people's lives. Even in



COURTESY PHOTO

John Ewing is a proud advocate of Omaha and is committed to advancing key initiatives that will enhance the lives of Omaha residents.

the campaign Viv was there every step of the way, at every event, every forum, providing insight and advice, providing encouragement, but ultimately being a rock for me when this became quite honestly exhausting."

SERVICE AND FAITH

The Ewings say their shared call to serve comes from their humble background, the example of giving back modeled by their elders and their rock solid faith.

"For me it comes from the fact that we grew up poor," he said, "and just being cognizant of the challenges we faced as a family growing up. That gives you a sense of grounding and gratitude for the opportunities to be able to contribute to people's lives."

The couple are ministers at Salem Baptist Church in North Omaha. Despite meager means, they saw their parents put faith in action to mentor and feed youth, and the Ewings similarly give back.

"I have a tremendous faith and for me that faith is based on love and then loving people," he said. "As a result of the love that God has shown to me I can then pour that out into other people, wanting to have an impact. I want to live that out the best I can. Instead of being someone who wants to tell other people how to live I want to show people love and meet them unconditionally wherever they're at."

For Viv, "Faith is a strong part of who I am and who we are as a couple and as a family," she said, "and so that is always at the forefront of the work that we do. We have a strong moral and faith fabric that governs our lives and decisions. We believe that is important. It's helped us to be successful in

the work we do."

ALIGNED AND COMMITTED

Couples can draw apart as life plays out and partners grow in different directions. The Ewings have remained steadfast no matter what life's thrown at them because of a compact they made long ago.

"We actually had an agreement years ago when we got married where we said divorce is not an option," he said, "so then it became a matter of wanting to do the work to be able to keep that commitment but also to be happy. There's people that stay married for a lot of years that aren't happy. We wanted to be able to have a great life together as well as for our two daughters Christina and Alexandria and now our grandson Christian."

The Ewings met as aspirational students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Depending on who you talk to, she told him or he told her, "Stick with me kid and you'll go far."

Said Viv, "We have a running joke about that because I always say I'm the one that said it and then he claims he's the one that said it. But that is something we both believe – stick with each other and we'll both go far. And it's been true, we have gone far, and we're going to go even farther."

The pair are so closely aligned that they share three of the top five Gallup StrengthFinder qualities – achiever, completion, maximize, they said.

Early on Viv saw he was bound for big things.

As many as 15 years ago she predicted he would be Omaha's first Black mayor. What made her so sure?

"Well, one, he's a great leader. Two, he's well respected. Three, he's a good administrator and decision maker. Four, he has the moral fortitude and the knowledge of how things should be done to lead the city. I saw the leadership quality in how he always led his life and led his career in the police department and the impact he was making in the community. He had all the makings of a fantastic leader and he's become even more great as a leader and will do a phenomenal job leading the city of Omaha."

Through it all, John said, "The great thing about our life is we've been on this journey together." When it comes to life-career turning points, he said, "We make these decisions together and

we're committed to it. Viv actually retired, at least for a while, so she could be more involved and supportive of this campaign over the last 15 or 16 months."

Said Viv, "It paid off, didn't it?"

"It wouldn't have happened without you, sweetheart," he told her.

BASE OF SUPPORT AND MANDATE FROM THE PEOPLE

Omaha native Karissa Denae Johnson, a social media influencer, author, singer and actress with the joyful message Go!Do!Be!, lives in New York but flew to Omaha for the inauguration. "I had to be there for the Ewings and this historic moment. They're close friends of the family." She appreciates how they took her under her wing, especially after her mother's death. Johnson embodies the Ewings' upbeat allies.

"We try to surround ourselves with only positive people. That helps you grow and develop as well," said John, adding that for him and Viv "It's really always being willing to support and encourage others and also being willing to learn and take the support that others have for you as well."

That holds true with the administrative teams he builds. In forming his mayoral administrative staff he was intentional in finding balance "between making sure people understand what my priorities are going to be and then giving people opportunities to see if they can help me achieve those goals," he said. "When I transition into the role of leader I'm careful to try and not make rash decisions."

Just as when he came into the Treasurer role 18-plus years ago and kept most senior staff members, he's done the same moving into the mayor's office. That includes having Stothert's chief of staff, Thomas Warren serve the same role for him.

"Tom Warren has been one of the most effective and trusted leaders in our community for over 40 years."

Warren, who long ago recognized his ambition, work ethic and intelligence, is glad to help Ewing realize his vision. "I do look forward to working with Mayor Ewing on his "intentional economic development" agenda. "We do have opportunities to transform North Omaha with significant economic development projects."

Ewing expects that with Warren's help he'll energize the staff. "It's really about building a team and creating an environment where people can be successful while also understanding we have to change and be better," said Ewing. "We have to if we're going to accomplish the goals the people of this community agreed with while I was on this campaign listening to them and then crafting an agenda based on what they said."

Clear, consistent, transparent communication is necessary, he said, "so that everyone understands the mission," adding, "It's not about me, it's about we and the team and the community and then our partners in the business and philanthropic community so that we can do great things together."

Ewing doesn't believe in posturing that he knows it all. He has no problem deferring to experts.

"That's always been the way I've led," he said. "I don't try to pretend I have the answer. I don't try to pretend I'm smarter than anybody else. I try to surround myself with really smart people who know their area of expertise, listen to them, empower them, give them the latitude to be able to lead themselves and then what I do is I help coach them and give them what they need in order to be successful."

Whether he goes for a second term as mayor or looks beyond to state or national office, his focus on public service that unites rather than divides will not end.

"I have decided this is the way I'm going to live my life regardless of the political climate or what other people think. The reality is each of us gets to make that decision if we are willing to be independent thinkers."

Meanwhile, Viv, whose lone bid for elected office saw her fall short of election to the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, is considering a possible run for the Metropolitan Community College board. She also plans expanding her consulting business. She's confident John will have a successful enough tenure these next four years to propel him to a second term or any new challenge he seeks.

Whatever they do, it won't be merely for the sake of winning an election or having a high profile position, but for serving the greater good in the city they've given their lives and careers to.

Data breaches continue to increase

By Kelly C. Bourne

It's impossible to know exactly how many passwords are in use worldwide, but in 2017, Inc. magazine predicted there would be 300 billion of them by 2020. That worked out to be about 38 passwords per resident of planet Earth. It isn't important whether that estimate was high, low or exactly right. The most critical question is whether the organizations that hold them are storing them securely or not.

Unfortunately, not all of these billions of passwords are safe. Data breaches are security incidents where confidential information is exposed to unauthorized parties.

The types of data exposed includes logon credentials (account IDs and passwords), Social Security numbers, bank account numbers, street addresses, email addresses and driver's license numbers.

In 2024 almost two billion people were known to have had their personal data exposed in data breaches. The actual number may be even higher.

Some of the largest data breaches in 2024 were:

- National Public Data lost 2.9 billion records including personally identifiable information (PII), addresses and Social Security Numbers in 2023 and 2024.
- AT&T phone records of almost all of its customers

were stolen by hackers in April 2024.

- UnitedHealth lost records including protected health information (PHI) belonging to over 100 million people in 2024.

- Ticketmaster lost data belonging to over 500 million individuals in a 2024 breach. The data exposed included names, addresses, email addresses and credit card details.

Some of the more common causes of data breaches are:

- Insider threats — When employees of an organization steals and sells information from their employer.

- Social engineering — Attacks used to trick someone at the targeted organization into revealing sensitive information, like their account ID and password. Once the bad actor has that information it can be used to access databases with personal information of clients, customers, employees, etc.

- Viruses or other malware — These can be used to attack an organization's systems. Viruses can be installed on a target computer if an employee at the organization opens an infected email attachment or clicks on an email link that leads to an infected website. Once the virus executes, it can give the attacker access to the organization's computers or network.

- Lost or stolen passwords — These can lead to unauthorized access and potentially a data breach at an organization.
- Software errors — If an organization doesn't apply patches and upgrades from the vendors, then an intruder can take advantage of vulnerabilities to access the firm's computers and potentially cause a data breach.

Once a criminal has stolen personal information from an organization, he will try to use it himself or make money from it. Common ways to exploit stolen data are:

1. Selling it on the Dark Web — Estimates of what personal information is sold for on the Dark Web range widely, but some examples are: credit card details are worth between \$10 and \$100. Online bank account information can sell for \$100. Facebook account credentials are worth \$45. PayPal account logins can sell for \$150.

2. Retaliation — In some instances a bad actor may

post credentials and other PII on the Internet where anyone can access them for free. This might be done to punish the organization from which the data was stolen

3. Credential Stuffing Attacks — Stolen account credentials can be used in a credential stuffing attack. In this type of attack a list of stolen credentials will be used to try to log into many websites. Examples of websites are Facebook, Paypal, Netflix, Amazon, email providers or major banks. If a person used the same password for multiple websites this type of attack can allow the hacker to take over numerous accounts.

Members of the public might ask how they can tell if their data was exposed in a data breach. Some answers to that important question are:

- When an organization learns that their system has been breached and there is a reasonable chance that personal information has been exposed, they may be required by state and federal laws to send out data breach notifications to all affected individuals. Getting a breach notification via email or a letter is one way consumers learn about the breach.

- Cybersecurity companies monitor the Dark Web where confidential data is frequently bought and sold. If data belonging to one of their clients is identified they will alert that client.

- Consumers can use websites like www.haveibeenpwned.com, www.f-secure.com, www.keepersecurity.com and uk.norton.com to see if their email addresses or passwords have been exposed on the Dark Web.

If you learn that your data has been breached some steps that you should perform include:

- Take advantage of free credit report monitoring that the affected organization is likely to offer.

- Consider placing a credit freeze or fraud alert with the major credit bureaus.

- Change the password and if possible, the username (account ID) of affected accounts.

- If you can't log into one of your accounts, then it's possible that it has been taken over by a cybercriminal. Contact the organization and request assistance to regain control of the account.

- If you used the same

password for other accounts change the passwords on those sites too.

Avoid falling victim to a data breach:

- Be cautious whenever you receive an urgent request, such as changing your password or viewing sensitive documents. Remember that cybercriminals play on your emotions by forcing you to act quickly.

- Before you click a link, always hover your mouse over it. Watch out for spelling mistakes or suspiciously long URLs that can hide a website's true domain.

Consumers can't prevent their data from being exposed by data breaches. Protecting our PII is the responsibility of the banks, retailers, government agencies, hotels, data brokers, casinos, credit bureaus, schools, etc. that are using and storing it. But there are steps consumers can take to reduce the odds or minimize the damage if their credentials are exposed by a data breach.

- Use Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for your online accounts. If a criminal learns your password, then MFA will prevent him from accessing the account.

- Don't use the same password for multiple online accounts.

- If the website allows it, set it so multiple failed login attempts will lock the account temporarily, e.g. for 30 minutes or an hour.

- Change your passwords periodically.

- If you learn that a vendor or website you have an account with has been hacked then change your password immediately.

- If you receive a breach notification from a website change that password as well as any other accounts that use the same password.

When we go online, we cede control over our personal data to others and trust that they will safeguard it. Unfortunately, they aren't always worthy of that trust.

Hopefully, the information in this article helped you to understand what can happen if sensitive information is breached and how to respond.

Kelly's newest book, "Ransomware, Viruses, Social Engineering and Other Threats: Protecting Your Digital Assets" is available on Amazon and at The Bookworm.

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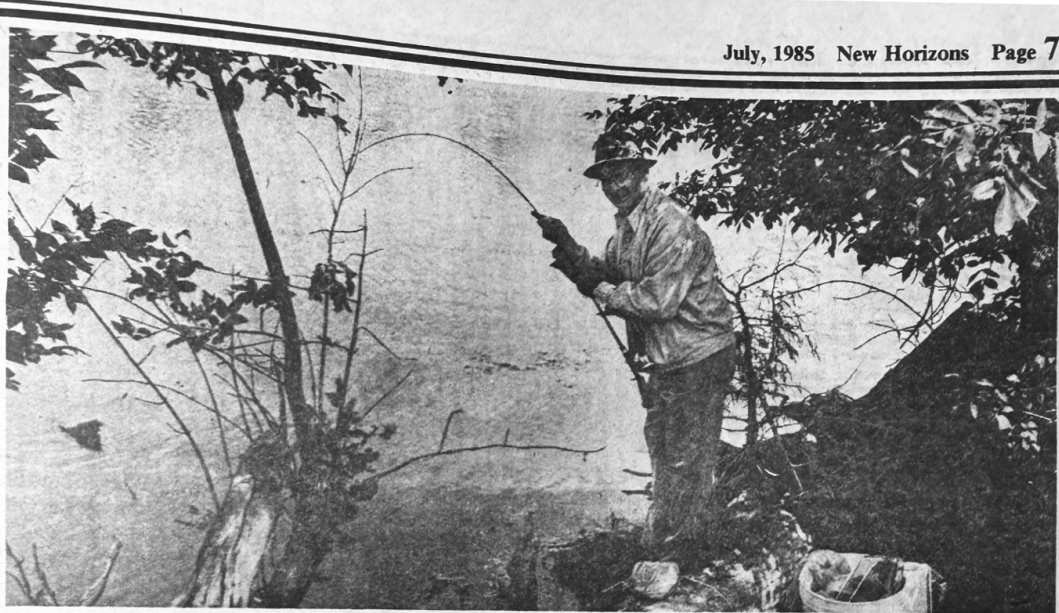
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Taking a look back at old New Horizons newspapers: July



July, 1985 New Horizons Page 7

Ivan L. Cobb has a bass on the line at the lakes. Ivan and partner Elmer Steinmeyer reeled in five fish.

Unlucky anglers still have fun

BY JACKIE EGAN
New Horizons Staff Writer

Early Friday morning, June 14, about 30 fishing enthusiasts, oblivious to the rain, crowded into a yellow school bus with friends, tackle, reels and lawn chairs.

Participants wore an assortment of picturesque straw and canvas

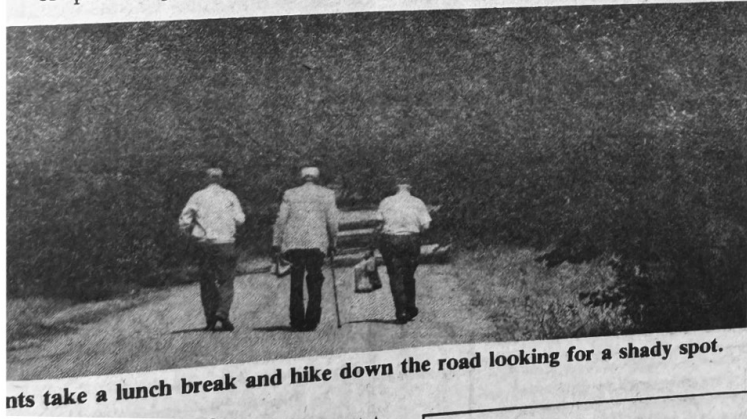
fishing hats, baseball caps and visors. On the bus the anglers swapped stories and jokes, fishing tips and favorite fishing spots. Within an hour's drive from Omaha, Fremont Lakes Recreation Area provided the setting for a morning of casting, reeling and

reuniting with old friends. Another 12 older anglers arrived in their cars to join the busload at the fishing site.

The fishing was less than excellent and a few complaints were heard. "Fremont Lakes are full of algae and scum. Clean 'em up. Fishing is poor, poor, poor," reported Z.W. Clark. Although the fishing wasn't great for most, Ivan L. Cobb and Elmer Steinmeyer teamed up to catch three blue gill and a large-mouth bass, which were given away on the bus trip home.

And though most of the anglers were shutout, they felt the excursion was still worthwhile. "This was a great trip," said Willie Zackery.

The fishing trip was organized by Melva Ball of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Nutrition Department and is likely to become a regularly scheduled event.



Anglers take a lunch break and hike down the road looking for a shady spot.

COURTESY PHOTO

In the July of 1985 issue of the New Horizons, New Horizons staff writer Jackie Egan, wrote an article about a fishing trip that occurred in Fremont.

Staying on top of your physical wellness checklist

Positive physical health habits can help decrease your stress, lower your risk of disease, and increase your energy. Here are tips for improving your physical health.

Get Active: Sedentary behavior has been linked to many medical problems. Moving more and sitting less can have major health benefits. Experts recommend adults get at least 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate physical activity a week. You can benefit from even a little activity at a time. Every minute counts when it comes to movement.

Maintain your muscle: Building muscle helps you keep up the activities you enjoy. Some types of strength training keep your bones healthy, too. Experts recommend doing strength training for all the major

muscle groups two or more days a week for adults and three for kids and teens.

Eat a healthy diet: We make dozens of decisions every day. When it comes to deciding what to eat and feed our families, it can be a lot easier than you might think to make smart choices. A healthy eating plan not only limits unhealthy foods, but also includes a variety of healthy foods. Find out which foods to add to your diet and which to avoid.

Mind your metabolism: Your metabolism changes as you get older. You burn fewer calories and break down foods differently. You also lose lean muscle. Unless you exercise more and adjust your diet, the pounds can add up. Middle-age spread can quickly become middle-age sprawl. Carrying those extra pounds may

be harming your health.

Build healthy habits: We know that making healthy choices can help us feel better and live longer. Maybe you've already tried to eat better, get more exercise or sleep, quit smoking, or reduce stress. It's not easy. But research shows how you can boost your ability to create and sustain a healthy lifestyle.

Find a healthy weight: Keeping your body at a healthy weight may help you lower your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer that can result from carrying excess weight or obesity. Take charge of your weight and your health.

Submitted by Karen Rehm, worksite wellness specialist. To contact Karen at 402-483-1077 or send an email to krehm36@gmail.com.

King Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Story lines
 - 5 Entanglement
 - 8 Victor's cry
 - 12 Barking mammal
 - 13 Artist Yoko
 - 14 Scrapped mission
 - 15 Hawaiian city
 - 16 Tic-tac-toe win
 - 17 Corrida bull
 - 18 Surround
 - 20 Edge
 - 22 Standard
 - 23 Fiddle stick
 - 24 Umps
 - 27 Revolt
 - 32 — Baba
 - 33 To and —
 - 34 Modern, in Bonn
 - 35 They can hold their heads high
 - 38 Aussie greeting
 - 39 Takeoff stat
 - 40 Comic Philips
- DOWN**
- 1 Tennis legend
 - 2 Check
 - 3 Young whale
 - 4 Sailing vessels
 - 5 PBS anchor
 - 6 Rock's Brian
 - 7 Nitwit
 - 8 Preambles
 - 9 Oboe, for one
 - 10 Folklore monster
 - 11 Queen dowager of Jordan
 - 19 "— Boheme"
 - 21 Kimono closer
 - 24 Tatter
 - 25 Yalie
 - 26 Kindling
 - 28 Opposite of "post-"
 - 29 Guitar-making material
 - 30 PBS supporter
 - 31 Chap
 - 36 Makes amends
 - 37 New Deal pres.
 - 38 "Faust" dramatist
 - 41 "— Deeds"
 - 42 Awestruck
 - 43 Dorothy's dog
 - 44 Heidi of "Project Runway"
 - 46 Rocky outcrop
 - 47 Monarch
 - 48 Freshens lawns
 - 51 Sugar suffix

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19			20	21				
			22					23				
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32					33					34		
35			36	37						38		
		39					40	41				
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50	51				52		
53					54					55		
56					57					58		

This Month's Crossword Puzzle

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

Moving day – making the tough transition from your current home to your home of the future

By **Andy Bradley**
Contributing Writer

Part one of a two-part series

Consider this. You live alone. You live in your debt-free two-story colonial, the same home you have occupied since your now-grown kids were toddlers. Three thousand-plus square feet, still overrun with kids' toys, your long-deceased spouse's clothing and shoes, and decades of tax returns and cherished memorabilia, including photos, scrapbooks, concert and graduation programs, historic newspapers and letters (back when letter writing was in vogue.)

And now this. You experienced a fall in the bathroom – tripping over that old threadbare bathmat. Nothing broken, thank goodness. But a deep facial bruise, just underneath your right eye, and a severely sprained ankle necessitated a visit to the emergency room. Fortunately, your neighbor was home and answered your call for help. She helped

you up, guided you down the stairs, eased you into her van and whisked you to the nearest emergency room.

After treatments but before your authorized release, a solemn-faced doctor, (who looks all of 22), enters your treatment bay, accompanied by a nurse and someone who introduces herself as a “medical social worker.” They ask a series of probing questions, obviously focusing on your living environment. After their interrogation, the team's directive is clear. It's time.

At first you pay no heed to the discouraging message. That night you dutifully call both your children, one living in Missouri and the other in North Dakota. You share the doctor's recommendation, adding, dismissively, “I'm OK. Just a little accident.”

Of course, your kids know this wasn't the first. Nor will it be the last. Much to your chagrin, they traverse I-29 and land suitcases-in-hand on your doorstep 24 hours later.

“Mom, we've got to talk.” And so it begins.

The often slow, uncomfortable and heart-wrenching series of conversations leading ultimately to the abandonment of the family home and waking up in a new, strange, distant and often unwanted surroundings.

The journey from realization to relocation is never easy, and doesn't necessarily progress in a predictable linear progression.

Generally speaking, the process unfurls in four chapters. The first, as described above, is realization – the discernment that, indeed, a new living environment is in our best interest; the second is research and discovery – the often fretful and confusing process of exploring living alternatives, and how to finance them; the third is transition – the labor-intensive and gut wrenching process of property disposal, packing up and moving; the final is settling in – the emotional and physical adjustment to a new living environment.

New Horizons will address the complications and challenges implicit in these steps in a two-part “Moving Day” series, commencing this month and concluding with the August issue.

Certainly, most seniors prefer to “age in place,” meaning that given the choice, most people would opt to live out their years at home. According to a 2023 Harvard University report, more than one-third of persons over 80 report an ambulatory difficulty, including walking and climbing stairs. So in order to stay home, they may need to wrap themselves in a caring network of community-based services designed to allow them to live safely, comfortably and indefinitely at home. For example, services offered, coordinated or arranged through the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) are designed for this purpose.

But in the end, some people opt to move, due often to complex medical, social, safety and financial considerations, and perhaps nudged by concerned and anxious family members. After the decision is made to vacate the premises, the search for new accommodations commences. The search can be long, confusing, and like Alice plunging



COURTESY PHOTO
Mary Ann Stallings
founded Bridge to Better Living in 2010 after a frustrating experience identifying housing options for her aging parents. Previously, she taught in Lincoln public elementary schools for 28 years.

down the rabbit hole, more confusing and complicated the deeper you burrow.

The first step is developing a basic understanding of the types of housing available, generally ranging along a continuum from totally independent to round-the-clock nursing care. Options may range from smaller single-story homes and villas to apartment living to senior independent living communities. Arrangements with added supports include assisted living, memory care, and various levels of long-term care. Some senior communities offer combinations of the above, featuring the opportunity to transition from one level of care to another on one campus.

Several resources help consumers navigate these options. ENOA, for example, offers a comprehensive listing of housing resources on its website, ENOA.org/resources. Links include nursing home inspection reports, assisted living communities, low-income affordable senior apartments and others.

ENOA care managers provide seniors valuable personalized information and assistance, with a focus on identifying supports that can help seniors remain at home for as long as possible. See ENOA.org for information, or call (402) 444-6536.

US News and World Report offers a detailed listing and rating of area senior living communities. Access this information at

health.usnews.com/best-senior-living.

Finally, several independent businesses help seniors navigate the housing conundrum. One, Bridge to Better Living, provides in-person, no-cost consultation to families and seniors in the Omaha and Lincoln area.

The company's founder, Mary Ann Stallings, said she or one of her five transition consultants meet one-on-one with families and their loved one to discern their needs and interests. They will arrange visits and tours of facilities that meet their requirements. For example, some seniors may require a quieter, more subdued environment, whereas others want a more lively setting with many social activities.

“We talk with them about what they need socially, medically, physically and financially,” Stallings said.

Recommended facilities have to “match their personality. Every community has a feel of its own. Each community has that personality. Let's say you are an extravert and you like lots of activities, and you walk into a community and don't see anybody and there are no activities, it's probably not going to match your personality.”

“We have a database to narrow down the communities that are going to fit their criteria,” Stallings said. During the tours, “We have a list of questions we go in with. We make sure that all the questions are asked and that all the services and amenities are transparent so that there are no hidden costs for our client. When they get in there, they know exactly what they are going to be paying for and what services will be offered.”

And financial considerations are paramount. For example, many clients may need to rely on Medicaid at some point. “We're not going to take them to a community that does not do Medicaid. That financial piece is very important.” She added, “We work with them through the whole process, from the very beginning until after they move in.”

Families will contact Mary Ann under one or more of these circumstances: Their loved one is not eating properly, forgetting

--Moving continued on page 13.



Mary Hiatt
Retirement & Insurance Advisor
Call or Text: 402.672.9449
mary@hiattagency.com



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Medicaid Eligible Plans



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The social security swindle

You receive an email that appears to be from the United States (US) Social Security Administration (SSA), a retirement program run by the US government.

The email says your SSA financial statement is now available. It even has an official SSA logo and provides instructions for viewing your statement by downloading an attachment.

However, the email isn't actually from the SSA.

Downloading the attachment installs software that lets cybercriminals access your computer. This software allows them to take full control of your device and steal your personal information, banking details, and private files.

They can then use this information to steal your identity and commit financial fraud.

Follow these tips to avoid falling victim to a phishing scam:

- Never download attachments from unexpected emails. Remember that real government agencies typically communicate sensitive information through paper mail, not email.
- Check the sender's email address carefully. Scammers often use sender addresses that look similar to official ones but have small differences.
- While this scam targets users in the US, remember that cybercriminals can use similar tricks worldwide. Always stop and think before you click.

DEEFAKE, DEEP TROUBLE

Cybercriminals are using artificial intelligence (AI) to try to trick you into clicking malicious links.

You receive a text message or voice

call from someone claiming to be a senior United States government official. They will try to establish a friendly relationship with you by sounding genuine, making the official seem trustworthy.

But these messages are fake and were actually created by AI. No matter the message you receive, the "official" will eventually ask you to use a different messaging app to continue the conversation. They will then send you a link that will supposedly take you to the new app.

However, the link is actually malicious. If you click it, cybercriminals will be able to access your data and personal information.

Follow these tips to avoid falling victim to a phishing scam:

- Be suspicious when strangers try to become friends quickly through texts or calls. Scammers will often try to become friendly with you so that you will be more likely to fall for their tricks.
 - Never click on links sent to you by an unknown person. These links could install malware, steal your data, or take you to fake websites designed to capture your personal information.
 - This scam is based in the United States, but be careful about messages from anyone claiming to be a government official, even if they act friendly. Scammers could use similar tactics anywhere in the world to try to steal your data.
 - If you aren't sure if a message is legitimate, delete or report it.
 - Don't reply to unexpected text messages, even to say "STOP" or "unsubscribe." If you have any questions regarding delivery, contact your local post office directly.
- For more information, visit KnowBe4.com.

--Moving continued from page 12.

or misusing their medications, appears lethargic and depressed, but are reticent to do anything about their circumstances.

Sometimes adult children believe their parents need a new living environment but the older adult is slow to concur. "In most cases, we're able to get them to at least look," Stallings said. "Sometimes we say let's just go take a look. You're not committed to anything at this time."

During those early discussions, "We find out what they like," then explain how moving could actually increase and enhance these experiences.

Typically, after the move, clients are delighted and could kick themselves for not taking the leap earlier. "Most people say, 'I wish we had moved sooner,'" Stallings said. "We hear that over and over."

Bridge to Better Living has operated in Omaha and Lincoln for nearly 15 years. It has an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau.

Inquiries to Bridge to Better Living are responded to quickly and the consultation process can begin in short order. "The fastest I've ever placed anyone is 45 minutes," said Stallings. "A daughter in Tennessee called and her mother had to be moved by the end of the day, so we were able to do it."

Conversely, Stallings suggests her clients begin the investigative process for themselves or a parent years before the critical need arises. "I have another couple who are planning two to four years out. So far we've looked at six places and we have two more

to go."

Since Bridge to Better Living does not charge its clients, the company is paid by the facilities that ultimately take in their clients.

Stallings is a retired Lincoln elementary school teacher. She started the company after difficulty finding new living accommodations for her parents, as well as for her husband's. "My husband and I had multiple family members who needed to make the move from their home into a retirement community, and we didn't know what questions to ask, we didn't know where to start."

"Bridge to Better Living was basically founded because of frustrations. I got to thinking, there's got to be a better way to help people through this process."

When she founded the company "I wanted it to be high touch, that we were with people from step one all the way through, and then even follow up. I wanted it to be people based."

Fifteen years later, she has found the work fulfilling. Her rewards are "the smiles that I see when people walk into a community and they know this is the place for them," Stallings confided. "It's the hugs we've gotten and it's the long-term friendships. It's so rewarding."

For more information, access bridgeto-betterliving.com or call (402) 218-5610.

(Next month's focus will be on logistics of the move itself – how to prepare your home or apartment for the move and how to execute the transition, especially when you are unable to handle the physical challenges of a move or have no one to assist in the process).

Intercultural Senior Center

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

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

The ISC offers a morning snack, and regular or vegetarian lunch.

Come and exercise at the ISC. It's never too late to learn and have fun. Join their language classes, technology, jewelry and crafts, and field trip options.

Lunch reservations are due by 9 a.m. A voluntary contribution is suggested for the meal.

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

For more information, please call 402-444-6529 or visit the ISC website at interculturalseniorcenter.org.



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July Activities: 2nd- Make a 4th of July decoration; 7th- Bingo; 9th- Trivia; 11th- History game; 14th- Memory game; 16th- Make a patriotic snack; 18th- Scrapbooking; 21st- Bingo; 23rd- Puzzle challenge; 25th- Painting; 28th- Charades; 30th- Yahtzee!

Beautiful Savior Senior Activity Center
7706 S. 96th St. La Vista, NE 68128

Have questions? Contact Dawna Nikiema, Beautiful Savior's Senior Activity Center Director, at 402.331.7376 or sac@bslcomaha.org.

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redcross.org/smokealarmIA



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**INSTALL
SMOKE ALARMS.**

**MAKE A FIRE
ESCAPE PLAN.**

Medicare enrollment options to look for

By Mike Carsey
Volunteers Assisting Seniors

Tom came into the Volunteers Assisting Seniors office looking concerned, confused, and a bit on edge. "I think I may have messed up my Medicare enrollment and I am concerned about the penalties I keep hearing about.

Can you help me? Why does this have to be so complicated?"

Counselors hear this type of question quite often accompanied by a little panic in the voice of the client. If this is you, you are not alone.

Yes, there are penalties involved if a person does not enroll in Medicare at the correct time.

What are the enrollment options provided by Medicare and what are some of the common questions

people have?

Medicare provides several opportunities to enroll. These enrollment windows or scenarios are offered by Medicare to accommodate the wide variety of circumstances encountered by Medicare beneficiaries.

Have you chosen to receive your Social Security benefits before age 65?

Enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B is automatic for most people who receive Social Security benefits before age 65, Social Security disability before age 65, or Railroad Retirement Board benefits. You will receive your Medicare card enrolling you in Part A and Part B about 2 months before your 65th birthday month.

You do not have to accept enrollment. If you choose not to enroll you must respond to Social Security



— VOLUNTEERS — ASSISTING SENIORS

and decline enrollment.

Do you want to begin Medicare when turning 65 but you have not begun to receive Social Security benefits?

People who are not receiving Social Security benefits have the option to enroll in Medicare during their Initial Enrollment Period (IEP). This enrollment must be completed online.

The enrollment is not done automatically by Social Security/Medicare. Our counselors can provide written directions and information about Medicare online enrollment.

The IEP is a seven-month period. The seven months include the three months before your 65th birthday month and the three months after.

For example, if a person's 65th birthday month is January, the IEP looks like

this: October, November, December, January, February, March, April.

In this example, a person wanting to begin Medicare the first day of their birthday month, should enroll during one of the first three months of their IEP.

They may enroll up to three months after their 65th birthday month as well. If they choose that option, coverage will begin the month after enrollment.

Why would a person not want to accept the automatic enrollment or use their IEP to begin health coverage using Medicare?

The first reason might be that they are continuing to work and have employer group health insurance for coverage.

This coverage may also include family members. If they were to discontinue their employer group health coverage and opt to use Medicare, their family members may lose the coverage provided through their employer.

Second, they have health coverage through their employer, or their spouses, partners, or other family members employer, which is connected to active employment. When comparing Medicare costs and benefits, they find that the health coverage provided by the employer is a better option.

Third, they contribute to a Health Savings Account (HSA) provided by their employer and they want to continue to work and contribute to the HSA after turning 65. People cannot enroll in Medicare and continue to contribute to an HSA without financial penalties on the contributions made after Medicare begins. Importantly, financial contributions made before Medicare begins are not affected.

Many people choose to enroll in Part A only if they do not contribute to an HSA. Part A is often free,

and pays secondary to their employer coverage.

What if I continue to work and want to use my employer group health plan? Or my spouse is working and I am covered on the spouse's employer group health plan? Am I still required to enroll in Medicare?

Not necessarily.

If a person continues to work and is covered by an employer group health plan, they can enroll in Medicare any time after the last month of their IEP by using a Special Enrollment Period (SEP).

This enrollment can occur up to eight months after the discontinuance or loss of the group health coverage.

Most people begin this coverage the month after their group health coverage ends. No one wants to have a period without health coverage if possible. The coverage begins the first of the next month.

How does a person qualify for their Special Enrollment Period (SEP)?

By proving to Social Security/Medicare that they have had continuous health coverage tied to active employment either from their employer or their spouses, partners, or a family members employer.

Penalties may occur if enrollment does not take place during the IEP or SEP or that the coverage in place was not tied to active employment.

For example, coverage from COBRA, retiree health plans, VA coverage, and individual health coverage do not prevent penalties for Medicare A and B. The penalties are lifetime penalties and are paid in addition to Medicare premiums.

Volunteers Assisting Seniors (VAS) can help you investigate the options and assist you in determining whether you may be eligible for price reductions for your medications. Call our office at 402-444-6617 for more information. Follow Volunteers Assisting Seniors on Facebook at "VAS Nebraska." Information about Medicare and Fraud are included. "Fraud Friday" is a feature providing the latest information about phone and email scams as well as other information about fraud.



As a Seniors Real Estate Specialist®

I leverage a network of senior specialists and vital community resources to assist seniors in making informed housing decisions.

Are you seeking senior living options, but not sure where to begin?

Do you need to sell your home before you can move, but don't know who to turn to?

Jan Nicola | 402-720-5413

SRES 



Join the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program

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

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

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

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





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



ENOA

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:

• **July 8, Sept. 9, Nov. 11**
St. Vincent de Paul Church
14330 Eagle Run Dr.

• **July 26, Sept. 27, Nov. 29**
Faith Westwood
United Methodist Church
4814 Oaks Ln.

• **Aug. 7, Oct. 2, Dec. 4**
The Servite Center of Compassion
72nd St. and Ames Cr.

• **Aug. 20, Oct. 15, Dec. 17**
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
93rd and Dodge streets

The Solutions Groups are facilitated by Nancy Flaherty, MS, CDP, president of Flaherty Senior Consulting. She has extensive experience working with family caregivers and caregiver groups.

For more information, email Nancy at flahertyconsulting@cox.net or call/text her at 402-312-9324.

Camelot Friendship Center

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

- **July 4:** Center is Closed for 4th of July
 - **July 9:** Performance by Kim Eames with Merrymakers @ 11:45 a.m.
 - **July 16:** Craft - Art Class with Jennifer James @ 12:30 p.m.
 - **July 17:** Jackpot Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
 - **July 18:** Book Club @ 12:30 p.m.
 - **July 29:** Team Trivia Challenge @ 12 p.m.
- Every Monday – Card Game: Manipulation @ 10 a.m.
Every Monday – Pickleball @ 10 a.m.
Every Monday and Friday – Bingocize @ 10 a.m.
Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday – Kings in the Corner @ 10 a.m.
Every Wednesday – Chair Volleyball @ 10 a.m.
Everyday – Card Games @ 10 a.m.
Grab N Go meals are available.
For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or barbara.white@cityofomaha.org.

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.

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

This Month's
Sudoku Answers

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

This Month's
Crossword Answers

Ballroom dance is for all at the La Vista Senior Center



NEW HORIZONS PHOTOS

Ballroom dancing is a broad term referring to a collection of partner dances. It encompasses a variety of styles, including International Standard (Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot, Quickstep), International Latin (Cha Cha, Samba, Rumba, Paso Doble, Jive), American Smooth (Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, Viennese Waltz), and American Rhythm (Cha Cha, Rumba, East Coast Swing, Bolero, Mambo). The La Vista Senior Center, located at 8116 Park View Blvd in La Vista, hosts a ballroom dance class every Monday.



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Table tennis can be a beneficial and easy to play activity for older adults

By Ron Petersen

Table Tennis helps relieve stress, stimulates the brain and it's an exercise that stimulates hand-eye coordination, while increasing concentration.

It's an activity many can pick up, and if you are looking for a club to join, look no further than at the Omaha Metro Table Tennis Club (OMTTC) in La Vista.

"It's fantastic," Omaha Metro Table Tennis Club co-founder, Roy Smith said. "We had six members when we first started the club. A year later, we got up to 10 and now we see anywhere



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Table tennis offers numerous benefits for older adults, including improved hand-eye coordination, reflexes, balance, and mental acuity, while also promoting social interaction and a fun way to stay active.

between 20 to 40 people here on a Thursday and Sunday evening."

In 1998, Roy Smith, Rod Cowles, and the top player

in Nebraska, Todd Peterson came together and merged two clubs together into the OMTTC. Early on, the OMTTC were trying to gain

members and were looking for a facility for members to play table tennis. The OMTTC continued to grow after finding the perfect spot for

members to meet at, which is in the Faith Presbyterian Church gym, in La Vista.

"It's been a lot of fun," Smith said. "As we've grown, we've seen more people come regularly. We have room to grow even more when we are busy because we want to grow the sport here in Omaha."

Studies have shown that there are many benefits of table tennis, and that people of all ages can participate in the activity. The following benefits of table tennis include:

- Stimulates brain function
- Develops tactical thinking skills
- Develops hand/eye coordination
- Provides aerobic exercise
- Provides social and recreational interaction

Other benefits may include relieving stress, increase in diversity awareness, expanding your network, playing at any age and not having to be a competitive player to reap the benefits of playing table tennis.

"Movement and adrenaline are the best benefits," Smith said.

Regardless of age, fitness level or disability, table tennis is an easy-to-learn sport that's great for social activities.

"I play because it is fun and I love the competition," Smith said. "About a quarter of our members are seniors. We have a lot of really good players, and we do get quite a bit of visitors as well."



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Locals are able to play table tennis weekly at the Metro Table Tennis Club on Thursday and Sunday evenings at the Faith Presbyterian Church gym, in La Vista.



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