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Office on Aging

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New Horizons

Musician utilizes musical gifts to spread joy, social awareness from coast to coast

By Ron Petersen

By 2014, Michael Murphy had made a name for himself in the music industry.

While it wasn't easy getting to the point to be an opening act for Neil Young, Murphy with his many musical talents, made the big time.

"I opened the concert with the flute. People flocked in and started to come to the stage," Michael Murphy said. "It was a huge moment – I never did it for the money and I still don't."

Omaha native, Michael Murphy, grew up playing multiple instruments including the piano, guitar and the Native American flute.

Murphy started playing the piano when he was a 6-year-old, broke out the guitar in the seventh grade and then found his way to the flute when he made a wooden flute with his son.

"When my son was in kindergarten, the homework was to do a craft with mom and dad, to get us involved with their education. I wanted to make a dreamcatcher with my son, to make sure he learned about Native American culture. But on the last page of the book, was how to make a flute," Murphy said. "We



COURTESY PHOTO

used a wood shop to build this flute and when I blew into it, I immediately thought I could hear my mom sing. There was a connection – it evolved, and it became what it is today."

As Murphy progressed through life, he learned that music was going to be where he'd find his niche.

"I love playing music – I've played at weddings, wedding rehearsals, colleges and at war protests," Murphy said. "It's all been

fun."

During the time of the Vietnam War, Murphy didn't get drafted, but tried to get involved back in the United States.

"I was just some guy playing music at VA homes and VA hospitals," Murphy said. "I wanted to help spread peace, love and kindness."

Instead of going to war, Murphy took his flute and musical talents to the streets of Washington D.C. in protest of the war.

"I went to perform at the National Indian Museum for a small presentation and I opened up for Neil Young at The National Mall," Murphy said. "They had me go play the flute here and there, and I had no clue where I was supposed to be. My music was on the news every night, so I did enjoy a couple minutes of fame."

Murphy traveled around the country performing and leading different protests.

Murphy was involved with the Whiteclay Advisory Committee, a group of activists concerned about alcoholism on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and about the sale of alcohol on the border of the reservation in the town of Whiteclay. Along with Canupa Gluha Mani, he performed and produced the music for The Battle for Whiteclay, a documentary about the Whiteclay issue. Murphy has been featured at the Omaha Summer Arts Festival, the Avoca Iowa Folk Festival, and the Lincoln Plainsong Festival. He frequently works with Winnebago leader, Frank LaMere, on the Whiteclay issue and in 2015 recorded a song with LaMere about

--Murphy continued on page 8.



Benefiting from escape rooms

Most escape room puzzles require creative problem-solving to progress through the game. This mental activity helps players to sharpen those skills, which can greatly benefit your personal life. Learn more about escape rooms on **Page 16**.

Tom Kealy competes in 17th Iowa Senior Games

By Ron Petersen

The aerobic nature of swimming, like other forms of aerobic exercise, increases the endorphins and other chemicals in the brain that decreases stress and anxiety levels. However, it's not just the physiological response in our brain that adds to our sense of inner peace in the pool.

"It's not just about the physical aspect, but it's about the mental part of swimming," Iowa Senior Games competitor, Tom Kealy said. "Getting out and getting in the pool is great for exercise – I try to get people to swim because you feel good when you get done. The pool is a great place to do rehab in as well."

Before competing in his first Iowa Senior Games at 50-years-old, Tom Kealy's love for swimming started when he was 9.

After learning how to swim at the Town and Country Aqua Club, the Council Bluffs native went on to compete in the pool at Abraham Lincoln High School and college at South Dakota State University.

Years later, the 68-year-old moved back to Council Bluffs and found himself at a swim meet, which is where he found his love for swimming again.

He started swimming in Council Bluffs when he was 9 at the Town and Country Aqua Club, where he and his friends learned how to swim.

"I fell in love with it again – it gives you a good reason to work out and it feels good to get out there every day," Kealy said. "You feel so much better when you are done."

In June, Kealy took his talents in the pool and competed in his 17th

--Kealy continued on page 6.

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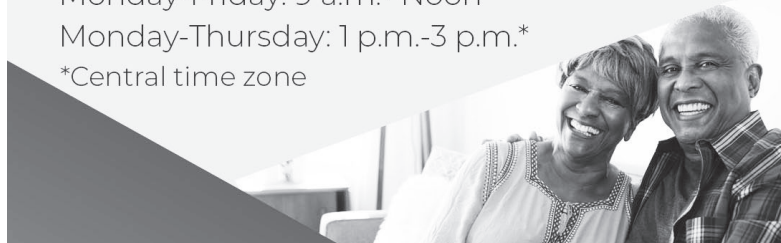
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Dental health does matter

Many people are surprised to learn that Medicare does not pay for anything related to keeping your teeth healthy. It does not cover oral exams, teeth cleanings, extractions, fillings, dentures, root canals, or dental implants. Sometimes people assume root canals or dental implants will be covered since these procedures require surgery, but Medicare does not cover root canals or dental implants.

Dental health is intricately linked to overall health. Poor oral health not only leads to discomfort, pain, and tooth loss but also increases the risk of serious health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and respiratory infections.

A common and painful issue for seniors that do not get regular dental exams and cleanings is receding gums. Receding gums, also known as gingival recession, occur when the gum tissue surrounding the teeth wears away or pulls back, exposing the tooth roots and potentially leading to tooth sensitivity, decay, and other dental issues. Dental cleanings and exams every 6 months are crucial for maintaining oral health and preserving the stability of your teeth.

When you're on Medicare, navigating dental care options can be a bit tricky due to the program's limited coverage for dental services. However, there are several avenues you can explore to access dental benefits and maintain your oral health. Here are some options to consider:

• Standalone Dental Insurance Plans: One option is to purchase a standalone dental insurance plan from a private insurance company. These plans are designed specifically to cover dental care and may offer a broader range of services compared to Medicare Advantage plans. Standalone dental insurance plans typically



A non-government entity

come with monthly premiums, deductibles, and co-payments, so it's important to carefully review the plan details, including waiting periods, coverage limits, and network providers, to ensure it meets your needs and budget.

You can sign up for a Dental plan today and get coverage the first of the next month.

• Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C): Most Medicare beneficiaries that are on Medicare Advantage plans, also known as Medicare Part C, do not purchase a standalone dental insurance plan. Medicare Advantage plans are offered by private insurance companies approved by Medicare. It's essential to review the specifics offered by each plan before enrollment.

• Discount Dental Plans: Discount dental plans, also known as dental savings plans, are membership-based programs that offer discounted rates on dental services from participating dentists.

Unlike traditional insurance plans, discount dental plans do not involve premiums, deductibles, or copayments. Instead, members pay an annual or monthly fee to access reduced rates on dental care.

While discount dental plans can be a cost-effective option for some individuals, it's essential to verify the availability of participating dentists in your area and understand the extent of the discounts offered for various services.

• Community Health Centers and Free Clinics: Community health centers

and free clinics may offer dental services at reduced or no cost for individuals with limited financial resources, including those on Medicare. These facilities often provide basic preventive and diagnostic services such as cleanings, exams, and X-rays, as well as some limited restorative treatments. While availability may vary depending on location and eligibility criteria, community health centers and free clinics can be valuable resources for individuals in need of affordable dental care.

• Dental Schools and Teaching Hospitals: Dental schools and teaching hospitals often have clinics where dental students, under the supervision of licensed dentists, provide low-cost dental care to patients. While treatment may take longer due to the educational nature of the setting, services are typically offered at reduced rates compared to private practices. Additionally, some dental schools offer specialized programs for older adults, including comprehensive dental assessments and treatment plans tailored to their needs.

• Veterans Affairs (VA) Dental Care: While VA dental benefits are typically limited to veterans with service-connected disabilities, certain veterans may qualify for comprehensive dental care based on their eligibility status.

Eligibility criteria and coverage details vary, so it's essential for veterans to contact their local VA facility or visit the VA website to learn more about available dental benefits.

When exploring dental benefits options while on Medicare, it's crucial to consider factors such as coverage, cost, provider networks, and eligibility requirements to determine the best solution for your individual needs. Additionally, maintaining good oral hygiene practices, including regular brushing, flossing, and dental check-ups, is essential for preventing dental problems and promoting overall oral health and well-being.

For more information, contact Mary Hiatt is President of Mary the Medicare Lady at www.hiattagency.com or contact mary@hiattagency.com or call or text 402-672-9449 for more information.



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Coping with loneliness

Often senior citizens complain they feel that they have become invisible. They have the sense that others do not notice them and pass them by as if they are of no importance. This is a painful experience for those who feel their significance is being discounted. The gift of being truly present to another human being is profoundly significant. To feel seen and heard affirms a person's value.

We hear about the pandemic of loneliness that plagues our society. I believe loneliness is the result of not feeling seen or heard. Each of us has the capacity to interrupt loneliness by how we attend to others. This applies to our interactions with a spouse, children or the next-door neighbor. A real antidote to loneliness is our affirmation of another's significance.

As human persons, we long to be truly seen and heard. It is unfortunate that some parents, especially in the past, believed children should be seen and not heard. It is likely that these children were not heard and not truly seen. In other instances, grandparents are often enlisted as baby sitters. This can take the form of maintenance whereby we

Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

keep an eye on the kids so they do not get into trouble and are kept safe. Or it could be a time to shower attention on the little people, inviting conversation about things important to them. We are then able to express true interest in the children, no matter what developmental level they are at. This is a way to affirm their personhood.

I point out the difference between those who dismiss others and those who are truly attentive because we all have a choice on how we show up for others. As we age, we may be tempted to think we no longer have much to give. This is fallacy.

We have all met people who are wonderfully focused on being fully present to children, elders, and everyone else. These people have a way of making one feel like they are the most important person in the world in that moment. I have witnessed healthcare providers who, by the way they interact with their

patients, demonstrate they see the patient as whole person rather than just a set of symptoms.

On the end of the life spectrum, we have the capacity to draw out older friends and family. It may mean turning off the television to have time for true conversations as we demonstrate our interest in what this person has to say. Good questions are a way to engage with another person. Eye contact, as opposed to looking at our phones, is important if the other is to feel seen.

Our epidemic of loneliness can be addressed by the gift of being truly present to another human being with our eyes and our ears. It can be a profoundly significant gift to our world.

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

Foster Grandparent Program volunteers recognized, honored



NEW HORIZONS PHOTOS

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) Foster Grandparent Program honored its volunteers during a recognition luncheon at the Benson Theatre in May. ENOA honored 43 volunteers for this fiscal year.

The luncheon included Music Bingo, lunch, along with two speakers: Lindsay Wilkinson and Julie Blaskewicz.



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Ad Mgr.....Mitch Laudenback, 402-444-4148
Contributing Writers.....Leo Biga & Andy Bradley

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Seniors enjoy golf into their 90s – and beyond

By Andy Bradley
Contributing Writer

90-year-old Joe Schueneman has been golfing with the same clubs for 60 years – and is still a top scorer at the Steve Hogan nine-hole, par 3 course in North Omaha.

92-year-old Birdie Knowles has played for half her life, picking up the sport at age 46 in order to spend more time with her golf-playing husband.

101-year-old Robert Walls, formerly of Omaha, still golfs several times a week around his new home north of Phoenix. He practices daily on his makeshift green and practice net in the backyard, frequents local driving ranges and tackles some of the more challenging courses around.

No, golfing isn't an activity reserved for business executives crafting deals on the back nine, or millennials who want to impress peers and associates with their 250-yard drives.

Rather, golf is enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. The folks who frequent the Steve Hogan Golf Course as part of Miller Park on North 30th Street can attest to that.

These recreational golfers give various reasons for sticking with the sport after decades, despite its inherent frustrations and disappoint-



ANDY BRADLEY PHOTO
Steve Hogan Golf Course Manager Mike Rice and 92-year-old Birdie Knowles, the oldest regular at the city-owned course.

ments.

Outdoor exercise, companionship and fun top their lists – pretty much the same reasons experts provide when itemizing the benefits of playing golf later in life.

A 2022 Golf Science Journal study concluded “Playing golf is associated with improved physical health and mental well-being, and it potentially contributes to increased life expectancy.”

That’s certainly the case with the senior golfers interviewed at the Steve Hogan Golf Course, named for the late Steve Hogan, the first African American golf professional in Omaha.

Bev Thompson started golfing when she was 35.

She’s now 82. “I just love being out in the fresh air and getting exercise,” she said. Bev encourages the sport for “anyone who wants to get out and relax.”

“Did you use the word, relax?” quipped one of her golfing companions.

“It does get frustrating,” Bev admitted. But she realizes, “It’s just a game. It’s not a big deal.”

The mother and daughter team of Jan Schuemann and Sherry Decker view the sport as an opportunity to share more time with one another. “We love being together,” confided Jan, who also lauded the “magnificent course and staff at Steve Hogan.”

Sherry added, “As bad as we play, it’s still fun.” Sherry picked up golf when her children started playing and she wanted to be a part of their experience.

These women are part of the oldest women’s golf league in Omaha, according to facility manager Mike Rice. The course sponsors five leagues, including mixed and women’s.

The oldest participant is Birdie Knowles. She enjoys the comradery and the natural exercise and sunshine. She admitted to hating traditional exercise and doesn’t frequent gyms. “This is the most exercise I get all week.”

Birdie maintains a full and active life, apologetically ending our conversation saying, “I’ve got to go play bridge.”

Just as active is Joe Schueneman. At 90, Joe golfs weekly with his grandson. He picked up golf at age 11. He was a caddy at an Illinois country club, a job that paid \$2 an hour plus tips back in 1945. He didn’t do it for the money (although it was enough to allow him to ditch his paper route), but for the opportunity to play free golf on Mondays when the course was closed to members.

He continued playing in high school. “I went out for the golf team just to get free golf,” Joe confessed, but ultimately became one of the top players on the team. A friend encouraged him to walk on at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, saying, “It’s not how good you are. It’s free golf!”

Playing in college with borrowed shoes, he briefly considered pursuing a pro-

fessional career upon graduation. But after military service, “I got married and gave up the idea of professional golf.” But he never abandoned recreational golf while balancing a career and raising six kids in Minnesota, then Kentucky. He moved to Omaha in 2010. His six kids now live in six different states.

Today, he averages in the low 30s at the par 27 course. He recently shot a 31 and is still striving to score in the 20s. The day we met him, we followed him off the first tee. His first shot landed on the fly just yards short of the green; after chipping a few feet from the hole he putted for par – all the while his grandson was scrambling somewhere in the rough.

In addition to playing golf, Joe is a deacon and leads prayer services where he lives at Notre Dame Housing, just a short distance from the course. He also leads the daily morning exercise routines. He believes these activities have contributed to his longevity – “they are some of the reasons I’m still around.”

For more information about golfing at Steve Hogan, 6315 N. 30th St., or joining one of its leagues, contact the course at 402-444-5396. Fees are \$13 for nine holes, \$6.50 to repeat the round. Carts are available for an extra fee. Steve Hogan is one of eight city-managed courses in Omaha; four are par 3s. Fees are identical at each.

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ANDY BRADLEY PHOTO
Mother and daughter team of 74-year-old Jan Schuemann and Sherry Decker.

Men's association features play at 21 golf courses

By Andy Bradley
Contributing Writer

Men 55 and older who want to experience the best area courses are invited to join the Eastern Nebraska Senior Golf Association.

The 350 members pay \$30 for the opportunity to explore 21 public and private courses a season. Weekly greens fees, cart fees and meals are extra. Each Monday or Tuesday, from May through September, about 100 members show up to play 18 holes and to share a meal. Door and cash prizes of up to \$20,000 a year are awarded. And you don't have to be a scratch golfer to join.

Association president Fred Grafton said golfers range in age from 55 to 90 (average age 72), and compete according to ability. Three so-called "flights" accommodate golfers with low handicaps (10 and under) to those who regularly shoot 30+ over par on 18 holes. This means members are always playing with golfers of similar abilities.

According to its website, ENSG.golfgenius.com, "we play relaxed golf where we set the courses up for fun." The season includes play on courses in Lincoln, Bellevue, Fremont, York, Sioux City, Beatrice and other localities, in addition to the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area. The year concludes with a two-man scramble and an awards banquet.

Solo golfers will be assigned to play with others, or can sign up with friends as part of a foursome. Partners can change weekly, if desired. Members choose which events to attend. For more information or to register, go to the website, or email ensga.help@gmail.com or contact Fred Grafton at fred.grafton@gmail.com.



COURTESY PHOTO

101-year old Robert Walls (upper left) and the participants in the Steve Hogan Golf Course junior program.

Walls invitational raises money for youth golf

By Andy Bradley
Contributing Writer

Before Robert Walls moved to the Phoenix area in February, he maintained a near-daily presence at the Steve Hogan Golf Course. When not golfing – pursuing another sub-par score – he helped maintain the course as a volunteer, especially repairing divots on tee boxes. "He kept our tee boxes immaculate," said course manager Mike Rice. "I don't care how hot it was, he's fixing divots like crazy."

"He was a staple around here," he added. Patrons would frequently inquire, "When is Mr. Walls coming in."

Walls is returning to Omaha later this month to participate in the 6th annual Bob Walls Invitational, a fund raiser named in his honor for the course's youth program.

Golfers will tee off at 9 a.m. on Sunday, July 28. The \$50 fee (\$60 after July 9) includes nine holes of golf at the Steve Hogan Golf Course, lunch and prizes. Call the course at 402-444-5396 to register.

How to start a book club in your community: Advice for older adults

Reading fiction or non-fiction can be entertaining and instructive in itself. When you extend that activity to talking to others about what you've read, those advantages are multiplied.

Here's a checklist to help you get your own book club started.

• **Invite potential members and schedule an initial meeting.** Brainstorm a list of people you know who might be interested in joining your book club. If you already play cards with friends, go to bingo nights or are part of a church group, why not start a reading group with a group that exists already? Remember to tell your friends to bring their friends too.

Once you have your list, invite members and schedule the first meeting. Some good places to have a book club meeting include a bookstore, a library, or a common area in your senior community. If the weather is good, you could even choose to meet in a park.

• **Decide what you want to read.** At your first meeting, all of you can decide together what you want to read. It may be a good idea to choose books that you know are available in large print or as audio texts.

If you're hosting your initial meeting in a bookstore, you can simply ask the staff where the large print and audiobook sections are and create your list from the titles you see. As you browse, create a book list with 10 or 20 titles or six to twelve months

of reading material. The next step will be to decide which book everyone should read first.

• **Fix a time and place to meet.** At your first meeting, all of you should also decide when and where to meet. Brainstorm where to hold the regular meetings. Your senior community may have a dedicated area that you can use. Someone else may have a contact at his or her church, and you might be able to hold your meetings after Sunday morning service.

You may also choose to hold a meeting in one of your member's homes each week and connect it to a Saturday lunch or Sunday brunch.

• **Decide how often to meet.** Book club meetings can be held weekly, biweekly, or monthly. During your initial gathering, determine how often everyone would like to meet. If you choose to meet weekly, not everyone may have had time to read the entire book; most of these meetings would be to discuss parts of the book and what readers like and dislike about them.

In short, creating a book club is a great way to keep your mind sharp and extend your social circle. To add interest, you can even think of a quirky name for your book club. Just remember to keep the doors open to new members. You never know who might have a great idea for a new book to read and discuss.

(Information provided by AARP).

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Intercultural Senior Center

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

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

The ISC offers offer a morning snack, and regular and 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. The garden is green and growing, volunteers are welcome. If people need assistance with their benefits, the ISC can help them out.

This month, older adults at the ISC can celebrate Independence Day on July 3 at noon and visit the center for a Hawaiian Party on July 18 at noon.

The Merry-makers will present music with Billy Troy on July 18 at noon.

Also, there will be Picnic at the Park on July 31 from 8 a.m. to noon.

Enjoy coffee and chat every Friday between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Lunch reservations are due by 9 a.m. A voluntary contribution is suggested for the meal. Their dining room will have lunch options available at 11:30 a.m., and after lunch, you can continue to practice your technology skills, attend crafts, and enjoy other fun activities.

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.

Respite Across the Lifespan

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

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

River City Theatre Organ Society

The River City Theatre Organ Society is hosting its annual concert at the Rose Theater, 2001 Farnam St., on Sunday, Aug. 11 at 3 p.m.

Theatre pipe organist Dave Wickerham will be the featured guest performer.

Through Aug. 1, prepaid and discounted tickets for older adults are available via mail for \$15 each by sending a check made out to the RCTOS to RCTOS, 8825 Executive Woods Dr., # 85, Lincoln, Neb. 68512.

Tickets are available at the door the day of the concert for \$20.

For more information, log on to rctos.com (Events) or call 402-421-1356.

Staying safe and healthy during the summer heat

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

With 339 square miles and nearly 600,000 people living within its jurisdiction, the Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) aims to serve everyone in Nebraska's most populous county. Rural and urban folks alike, all of them are our concern.

In this column, the second to appear in New Horizons, we will provide our community's seniors with some ideas on how to stay safe and healthy during the summer heat. DCHD also hopes our friends who live in the communities outside



Huse Douglas County will benefit from this information.

The summer heat has arrived. That means heat, which can be a welcome element after winter, but heat also brings with it some dangers. It is worth noting that, on an annual basis, heat is the leading weather-related cause of death.

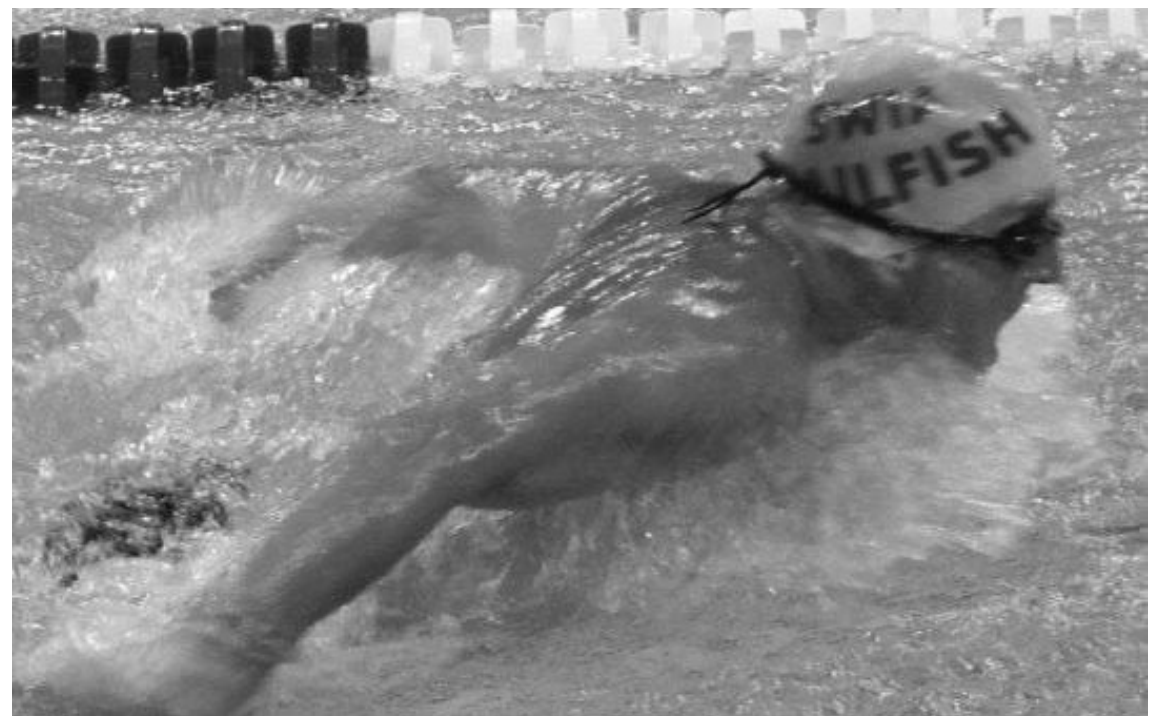
So, for Nebraskans who love their outdoor time, it's important to be ready for the heat to protect yourself from potential danger. Temperatures can be expected

to reach 90 degrees or more during the summer, and will be even warmer in parked cars, so here are some simple steps to avoid a heat-related illness:

- Never leave a person or an animal in a closed, parked vehicle.
- Drink plenty of fluids before you get thirsty – water is the best drink.
- Avoid drinking alcohol or caffeine.
- Take advantage of air conditioning as much as you can.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Outdoor activities should be limited to the cooler morning and evening hours.
- Athletes participating in outdoor activities need special attention and lots of fluids.
- People 65 years of age and older as well as children are more at-risk than other age groups. Be a good neighbor and check on them.
- A sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher should be used when outside.
- Consult your preferred news outlet for heat advisory updates, especially between noon and 6 p.m.

In short, stay cool, stay hydrated, and stay informed of the conditions.

Make it a great summer!



COURTESY PHOTO

Tom Kealy, who is a Council Bluffs native, currently holds 13 Iowa Senior Games swimming records as well as 14 Nebraska Senior Games records.

--Kealy continued from page 1.

Iowa Senior Games.

He broke two records and was half a second away from breaking two more records, in the eight events he competed in.

Kealy currently holds 13 Iowa Senior Games records as well as 14 Nebraska Senior Games records.

"It's all about the camaradery — you make some new friends and there are guys in my age group that is the same speed as me," he said. "I am going to have to work hard to break two records next year."

For his efforts in the pool, Kealy was inducted

into the Iowa Senior Games in 2022.

"It was an honor, and I was very humbled by it," Kealy said. "I was a normal kid growing up in Council Bluffs, so if you told me that I would get inducted into a Hall of Fame, I would say, 'yeah right.' I wasn't the fastest swimmer, but I competed well and kept at it."

Being an athlete all of his life, Kealy has a message to those who would like to test themselves to see how far they can go. Even when they fail, they love being able to push themselves.

"People sometimes need to be confident in them-

selves and to go out and try something new. Don't think you can't do something because it's all about the mindset," Kealy said. "People can be surprised in what they do if they put their mind to it. The more you do something, the better you are going to be."

Since Kealy is about staying in shape and continuing to break records, staying in the pool and competing in the Iowa Senior Games is something he plans to do for a long time.

"Swimming is something you can do for a lifetime," he said. "You can do this the rest of your life, so I plan on doing it as long as I can."

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:** Art Exhibition @ 9:30 a.m.
- **July 3:** Special music with Ben Tomasello @ 10:30 a.m.
- **July 3:** Pick Up & Pay for frozen meal @ 11:45 a.m.
- **July 8-12:** The Friendship Center is Closed
- **July 17:** Nye will bring their famous cinnamon rolls @ 9:15 a.m.
- **July 17:** Line Dance Lessons @ 9:30 a.m.
- **July 17:** Music with George and the Juniors @ 10:30 a.m.
- **July 18:** Mobile Library @ 9:30 a.m.
- **July 24:** Special music with Billy Troy @ 10 a.m.
- **July 25:** Presentation from the Alzheimer's Association Brain Health Awareness @ 10 a.m.
- **July 26:** Wheel of Fortune with Lori @ 10:30 a.m.
- **July 29:** Funny Money Auction @ 11 a.m.
- **July 31:** Music provided by Merry Maker's-Mark Irwin @ 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.

Millard Senior Center

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

- **July 3:** collecting Good Samaritan items
 - **July 3:** Board Meeting @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **July 4:** Happy Independence Day. Montclair Community Center & Pool is closed
 - **July 5:** Center is closed
 - **July 12:** Making sundresses and shorts to be sent to the Orphan Grain Train @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 14:** Collecting items for a donation to Good Samaritan Nursing home
 - **July 19:** Annual Christmas in July: Indoor picnic and basket drawing
 - **July 24:** Book Club "Fever" @ 1 p.m.
- Tai Chi on Mondays and Fridays @ 9:30 a.m.
 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.

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.

Volunteer Connect offers a variety of opportunities

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

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

- Florence Home is looking for volunteers to work with their Life Enrichment staff to help provide meaningful activities for all of their residents.

- Intercultural Center Ongoing Volunteer Instructors are needed for English, Technology, Citizenship, and more; class sessions run weekdays from 10:20-11:20 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Current offerings include English as a Second Language, Beginning Spanish, Technology, Citizenship, Sewing, Adult Literacy, and more.

- New Cassel has a variety of

volunteering opportunities for events and resident activities.

- Volunteers assisting Open Omaha to give a behind-the-scenes look at more than 60 of the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro's most fascinating spaces and places that shape our city. This one-week-end-only event is a city-wide open house. Saturday, August 3, Sunday, August 4. 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. 12:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.



- Siena Francis House, volunteers to assist with serving breakfasts (7:15-9:15 a.m.), lunches (10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.) and dinners (4:15-6:15 p.m.).

- Volunteers are needed to write greeting cards of encouragement to residents in skilled care assisted living facilities and Meal of Wheels recipients.

- Quilters to create lap blankets.

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Sun safety tips for older adults

By Nicole Burton, APRN FNP-C, Nurse Practitioner

Want to enjoy some sunshine in your golden years? Spending time outside can help you stay active, reduce stress, get vitamin D and support healthy aging. At the same time, older adults must guard against heat-related illnesses like heatstroke and prolonged exposure to ultraviolet light.

Follow these tips to help you stay safe in the sun:

Time your outings. The more you can limit your exposure to ultraviolet rays, the better. UV intensity peaks between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., so spend time outside in the early morning or late afternoon whenever possible.

Don't skip the sunscreen. Before heading outside, apply a thick layer of SPF 15 or higher sunscreen to all uncovered areas of your body, including your nose, ears, neck, hands and feet.

Use a water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen that filters out both UVA and UVB rays; these are the most damaging to our skin, and be sure the product is less than three years old. Reapply at least every two hours or immediately after swimming or sweating.

Dress for the weather. To stay cool — and help protect your skin from UV rays — wear light-

weight, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and long pants or skirts made of densely woven fabric. You can even look for clothing with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) number on the label. Wear a dry T-shirt or coverup after swimming, as wet clothing offers less UV protection.

Watch your head. Pull on a wide-brimmed canvas hat to shade your face, neck and ears. Skip the straw hats with holes that let sunlight in. If you prefer baseball caps, be sure to liberally apply sunscreen to your ears and the back of your neck. And if you don't have much hair, apply sunscreen to the top of your head for good measure.

Shield your eyes. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts. Choose sunglasses labeled "UV 400" or "100% UV protection," and consider wrap-around frames that cover the entire eye socket.

Stick to the shade. Spend time in shady spots under umbrellas or trees whenever you can. Keep in mind that even in the shade, you need sunscreen and sun-safe clothing to protect your skin from sun damage.

Stay hydrated. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink! When it's hot outside, make sure you're drinking more water than usual, and avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages. If you're taking

water pills or your doctor has restricted your fluid intake, ask them how much you should drink in hot weather. Also, know which medications can cause you to be more sensitive to the sun and/or dehydration.

Check the weather. Sometimes, it's just too hot to safely spend time outside. Enter your zip code on the CDC's HeatRisk website to find out the heat risk and air quality forecast in your area so you can plan ahead and protect your health. If the heat risk is severe, stay in air-conditioning, close the curtains, take cool showers, limit oven use and get plenty of rest. You can also check the UV index for your area that day as well so that you know if it is safe to be out in the sun that day.

Are you a caregiver of an older adult? You can support their sun safety by checking in with them at least twice a day and asking yourself the following questions:

- Are they drinking enough water?
- Do they have access to air-conditioning?
- Do they show signs of heat stress?

If you see symptoms of heat-related illness like muscle cramps, headaches, nausea or vomiting, seek immediate medical attention.

The article written is on behalf of ArchWell Health.

--Murphy continued from page 1.

Whiteclay and Pine Ridge.

"I was heavily involved in social justice events," Murphy said.

He even performed at the South by Southwest music festival in Austin, Texas along with traveling to other states including Oklahoma, Connecticut and New York. He even traveled to other countries like Cuba and Guatemala.

"I went down south to play music and play with the kids," he said.

Even when he wasn't traveling the world playing the flute, piano, guitar and singing, Murphy stayed busy bouncing around from job to job.

He spent his time during the week as a carpenter, professor, and he was even a courtroom bailiff.

But he used his carpentry skills to build his family a house along with helping

others with home projects.

"I developed skills and different traits. I was able to build a house, so we saved money on labor," Murphy said. "I've always been about paying it forward."

These days Murphy finds himself running on trails and performing a couple of times a week around the Midwest. He will take his flute to a local nursing home and will then find himself at a local county fair during the same week.



COURTESY PHOTO
Omaha native, Michael Murphy, has been a musician for more than 30 years and has traveled from coast to coast sharing his music.

"In 2014, I opened up for Neil Young in Neligh to raise money for a cause. I played at a nursing home on the way out there, I got to play at the concert and then I went to go to a different nursing home the next morning," Murphy said.

While he's performed on some of the biggest of stages, Murphy said his biggest critics come from local nursing homes.

"I get more feedback from the people that I am playing for, than anyone does playing at a bar. People want to be seen there," Murphy said. "Being able to sing them a love song is incredible."

He might look like a basic musician, but he always has a 'go-to' when it comes to grabbing his audience's attention at performances.

"I'll start with a flute because it's different. And then I will sing a song and play the piano," Murphy said. "I'll even sing a Beatles song because everyone in the world knows the Beatles."

With his flute in hand, along with the piano and guitar at his fingertips,

Murphy still is motivated to crank out music that comes naturally to him.

"Songs come to you when you pay attention to the things around you. I don't know what I didn't finish because I might have been distracted. But a lot of songs will come on deep runs or when I am thinking about life," Murphy said. "Sometimes it's good to be outside in the woods."

A very special song came to him on one of his deep runs around Lake Cunningham, about his wife Rita, who died from ovarian cancer.

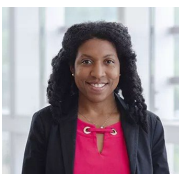
"I went on a run and the whole song came to me when I was running on those trails," Murphy said. "My heart had to move on — as soon as one verse ended, another one started. It was like I had an earworm. I got home, grabbed a guitar and started playing. I thought I was going crazy because I had so much anxiety and depression after losing my wife. My cousin, who is psychologist, said 'you are with your wife.' Sometimes I'll go on a run to be with her."

At the age of 71, Murphy loves to perform and doesn't have any plans of slowing down anytime soon.

"I just have fun and play. Because I play the flute and I'm old, I look like I have credibility," he said. "There's a song called, 'Enjoying the Ride.' We take things too seriously, so we need to enjoy the ride in every situation."

Memory and Aging Caring for Yourself and Others

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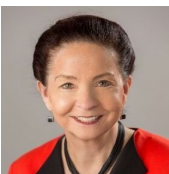
Brandi Flagg
MD, MPH



Diane Hendricks
LCSW



Jessie Jenkins
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Friday, August 9, 2024 – 9am to 2pm

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Attend in person or join via Zoom

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This program/project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$914,718.00 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.

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NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Older adults can gather around for a couple games of chess every Friday at the Camelot Friendship Center located at 9270 Cady Ave.

Camelot Friendship Center hosts Chess Club on Fridays

By Ron Petersen

There have been many chess clubs throughout the history of the game.

One chess club in particular have been located right in the heart of Omaha, where games of chess have been played at the Camelot Friendship Center since 2001.

“We are a place to have fun and we don’t have ratings,” said John Bagley, a member of the Chess Club since 2011. “This club is different because we are not a member of the United States Chess Federation, but we follow all of the rules. There is no cost to play, and we also do not run any tournaments with any cash prizes.”

The Chess Club was founded by Roger Anderson nearly 23 years ago.

The club welcomes all chess players regardless of skill level, visitors and regular members.

They usually have 10-12 players every week, but sometimes they have up to 20 visitors.

“We want to maintain a historical record, since we are the oldest chess club in the state of Nebraska,” Bagley said.

The Chess Club is held at the Camelot



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Roger Anderson started the Chess Club in 2001, and it has been going strong ever since.

Friendship Center every Friday from noon to 4 p.m.

“We don’t advertise, but it’s for everyone that wants to drop in,” Bagley said. “We invite everyone to stop in and play chess. If they want to come in regularly then that would be great. You can come and go as you please.”

Programs changing this month at AARP NE Information Center

By Tony Harris
AARP NE Information Center



Community Engagement Director at the Stephen Center, will talk about their mission and ways we can help support their important work in our community.

On July 17 at 1:30 p.m., anyone is invited to attend the AARP Nebraska Information Center’s monthly program to hear from AARP’s guest expert who will lead the discussion and explain a step-by-step

The Stephen Center in Omaha partners with individuals, families, and the community to overcome homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health concerns.

Learn more about the ways this organization supports people in our community at the AARP Nebraska Information Center’s July program.

Beth Robbins Ellis, the

process for starting to downsize.

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.

The Durham Museum

Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE, founder of the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace—has created an indelible legacy in the fields of science and conservation—a legacy celebrated in “Becoming Jane: The Evolution of Dr. Jane Goodall,” a new exhibition opening at The Durham Museum in June. Produced in partnership with the National Geographic Society and the Jane Goodall Institute, the exhibition explores Dr. Goodall’s life from her early years as an intrepid young woman with a dream to learn about animals in Africa, to her years establishing herself as a renowned scientist in Gombe, Tanzania to her present role as an activist, mentor and advocate for creating a better world for all life on Earth. “Becoming Jane” will remain open at The Durham until October 13.

Widely known for her innovative approach to animal behavior research, Dr. Goodall traveled to what is now Tanzania’s Gombe Stream National Park and immersed herself in observing chimpanzees in their natural habitat. Her work studying the lives of chimpanzees in the wild captured the imagination of the world. Rather than seeing the animals as subjects, she came to know them as individuals with personalities and emotions—a notion once rejected by the scientific world, yet now considered revolutionary. Her story—one of fearless determination, curiosity, the pursuit of knowledge and a passionate love of the natural world—has resonated with generations of people around the globe.

“This exhibition allows visitors to experience the incredible legacy of Dr. Jane Goodall and connect with her story of patience and perseverance,” said Jennifer Wallace, senior director of business development at the National Geographic Society. “Through immersive media and authentic scenic and interactives, the exhibition transports visitors into the field with Jane, experiencing her groundbreaking work with chimpanzees and her powerful message of hope.”

Highlights from the exhibition include:

- A multiscreen experience where visitors are introduced to Dr. Goodall’s extraordinary work, alongside surprising encounters with virtually rendered chimpanzees.
- A replica of Dr. Goodall’s research tent where, in a hands-on experience, visitors can envision themselves as scientists jotting down observations in their field journal.
- A hologram projection of Dr. Goodall who shares her memories in Gombe and recalls her thoughts, feelings, impressions and lessons learned while living among chimpanzees.
- Interactive augmented reality (AR) activities, including one in which visitors can test their skills at matching the pant-hoot vocalization of a chimpanzee.
- Updates on the current state of Gombe Stream National Park and the chimpanzee range in Africa, along with the work of the innovative scientists and conservationists who are following in Dr. Goodall’s footsteps.
- A call to action to visitors from Dr. Goodall to join her, the Jane Goodall Institute and National Geographic in an effort to ensure a more sustainable future for us all.
- A pledge station where visitors can share what actions they will take to help Dr. Goodall in her mission.

“Dr. Goodall, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday, has led a remarkable life, crisscrossing the globe to bring her message of hope to millions. Becoming Jane shares, through her own perspective, that journey,” said Dawn Myron, The Durham Museum’s Director of Communications. “From exploring memories of her childhood, to reading her hand-written notes, you’ll feel as though Jane herself is guiding you through the story of her life’s work. And in fact, there’s a hologram of Jane where she does talk directly to visitors, making for a truly engaging experience!”

For museum admission and exhibition hours, visit www.DurhamMuseum.org/jane.

The Durham Museum in Omaha’s beautiful art deco Union Station is home to permanent exhibits that preserve Omaha’s vibrant history, traveling exhibits covering subjects ranging from history and culture to science and industry, and many entertaining, educational, family-oriented activities. The Durham Museum is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and has strong ties with national and international museums and lending institutions. For information about The Durham Museum please visit the museum’s website at www.DurhamMuseum.org.

The Salvation Army Kroc Center Senior Games

The Salvation Army Kroc Center will host two days of senior friendly indoor and outdoor competition, on land and in the water. On the third day, Salvation Army will have leisure-level competition followed by a soup luncheon and awards ceremony.

The entire event will be held at 2825 Y Street from September 9-12.

Tickets are available for non-members, which is \$20 and for regular registration (August 1 – August 17), and it is \$25 for non-members.

For more information, contact Janet Miller at janet.miller@usc.salvationarmy.org or call Janet at 402-905-3520.

Medicare and You: Comparing Medicare enrollment options

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?”

Our 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.

The SHIP/SMP certified counselors at Volunteers Assisting Seniors can help you develop a plan of action specific to your needs. Our counselors are not insurance agents. We provide free, unbiased counseling services to Medicare eligible people in our community.

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

DO YOU WANT TO BEGIN MEDICARE WHEN YOU TURN 65 AND YOU HAVE NOT BEGUN TO RECEIVE



VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING SENIORS

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.

Volunteers Assisting Seniors recommends people begin the enrollment process between 60 – 90 days before the desired Medicare effective date.

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. --Medicare continued on page 11.

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.

The financial penalties come from the IRS. If this is your situation, reach out to Volunteers Assisting Seniors for assistance.

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 anytime 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

WILD WILLY'S FIREWORKS & MEALS ON WHEELS



Have a blast while supporting the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging's Meals on Wheels Program!

Part of the proceeds from the sale of fireworks at this Wild Willy's fireworks tent will benefit Meals on Wheels.

Wild Willy's Fireworks

9707 Q Street, HyVee parking lot

Look for MOW signs!

The tents will be open through July 4 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

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Joe & Olivia Gerroll Caring Transitions

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Staying hydrated

Temperatures in the summer can reach dangerous highs that can lead to lives lost due to heat stroke for those who are working in these conditions. While it is usually warned to stay out of the heat, many workers do not have that option. Keeping workers cool and well-hydrated are the best ways to protect them when working in hot environments.

There are many risk factors that may affect their heat tolerance. Know that these risk factors could include high air temperatures and humidity, direct sun exposure, indoor radiant heat sources, limited air movement, physical exertion, not drinking enough fluids (dehydration), personal protective equipment or clothing, certain medications, physical condition, lack of recent exposure (not acclimatized), and

advanced age (65+).

The average person has 2.6 million sweat glands and these sweat glands are activated when your brain decides the body needs to be cooled down. Whenever we sweat, we also lose water and electrolytes (i.e., "salts" such as sodium, chloride, potassium). Drinking enough water and having enough electrolytes is necessary for the body to function properly. Electrolytes should be obtained through your normal diet. It is recommended that for moderate activity in moderate conditions, each worker should drink 1 cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes. It's very important to remind workers to drink water frequently before becoming thirsty in order to maintain good hydration. A good indicator of hydration is urine color. The lighter the urine the more hydrated you are.

While it's important to maintain hydration, it is also important to stay cool. Workers should be allowed to take regular rest breaks. Breaks should be held in a shaded or air-conditioned area. Employers and supervisors should be monitoring weather reports daily. If possible, jobs with high heat exposure should be rescheduled to cooler times of the day. Other precautions to take can include reflective clothing, water-dampened cotton clothing, and cooling vests with pockets for cold packs.

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

ENOA's Senior Companion Program volunteers honored and recognized



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) Senior Companion Program honored its volunteers during a recognition luncheon at the Benson Theatre in June. ENOA honored 48 volunteers for this fiscal year. The luncheon included games and lunch.

--Medicare continued from page 10.

to have a period of time 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.

HOW CAN PEOPLE AVOID PENALTIES WHEN ENROLLING IN MEDICARE?

Enroll at the proper time. Each person has unique circumstances.

Medicare is complex but the SHIP/SMP certified counselors at Volunteers Assisting Seniors can assist you in navigating the complexity and help you design a plan of action.

Volunteers Assisting Seniors provides Medicare information to eligible people in Douglas, Cass, Sarpy, Washington, and Dodge counties. In addition, we conduct free Medicare workshops providing comprehensive information about aspects of Medicare enrollment, coverage, and benefits.

Volunteers Assisting Seniors 402-444-6617. 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 312 Omaha, Ne. 68105 (The old Center Mall on the corner of 42nd and Center) www.vas-nebraska.org.

King Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Kapow!"
 - 4 React in horror
 - 8 Pitcher Nolan
 - 12 Flamenco cheer
 - 13 Genesis shepherd
 - 14 Spanish greeting
 - 15 Squealer
 - 16 Drive- -- window
 - 17 "-- the picture!"
 - 18 2014 biopic about actress Kelly
 - 21 Rowing tool
 - 22 Expert
 - 23 Japanese verse
 - 26 Glutton
 - 27 Ultramodernist
 - 30 Rhine feeder
 - 31 Golf prop
 - 32 Basketball tactic
 - 33 Tibetan beast
 - 34 4, on a phone
 - 35 Dollar divisions
 - 36 Observe
 - 37 Texter's chuckle
 - 38 Where something is created
 - 45 QB Tony
 - 46 Ocho --, Jamaica
 - 47 Hollywood's Thurman
 - 48 Country singer Jackson
 - 49 Gaelic
 - 50 Fuel stat
 - 51 Partner
 - 52 Bump into
 - 53 Sound from a hot wok
 - 10 Mr. Guinness
 - 11 Post-WWII alliance
 - 19 Pepsi rival
 - 20 URL ending
 - 23 Stable diet?
 - 24 Small battery
 - 25 Annoy
 - 26 JFK Library architect
 - 27 Convent resident
 - 28 Tolkien creature
 - 29 Approves
 - 31 Math statement
 - 32 Sub shop
 - 34 "My word!"
 - 35 Waist-cinching garment
 - 36 Tea biscuit
 - 37 Unfettered
 - 38 Baby carriage
 - 39 "Damn Yankees" role
 - 40 Latin 101 word
 - 41 Blaze
 - 42 Periodontist's concern
 - 43 Rapscallions
 - 44 Kvetches
- DOWN**
- 1 McEnroe's rival
 - 2 Winged
 - 3 Transcending (Pref.)
 - 4 Fancy cake
 - 5 Loathe
 - 6 Lowly worker
 - 7 Fruit-filled dessert
 - 8 Horned beast
 - 9 Meditative practice

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12				13					14				
15				16					17				
18				19					20				
			21				22						
23	24	25				26				27	28	29	
30						31				32			
33						34				35			
			36						37				
38	39	40					41				42	43	44
45						46				47			
48						49				50			
51						52				53			

This Month's Crossword Puzzle

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

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

Up-to-date Information: COVID, flu, pneumonia and RSV available

By Ryan Baer, Creighton University Pharm.D. Candidate and David Kohll, Pharm.D.

As we head into the fall of 2024, Americans will have access to four crucial vaccines to protect against the major respiratory viruses: an updated Covid-19 booster, the annual flu shot, pneumonia and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccines for older adults. Health experts are urging everyone to get vaccinated ahead of what is expected to be a rough respiratory season.

The CDC recommends the 2024-2025 updated Covid-19 vaccines to protect against serious illness. Everyone aged 5 and older should receive one dose of an updated vaccine. Chil-

dren aged 6 months to 4 years may need multiple doses, including at least one updated dose. Those who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may require additional doses. People aged 65 and older should get an additional updated dose at least four months after their previous one. Staying up to date with vaccinations significantly lowers the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death from Covid-19.

For the 2024-2025 season, all flu vaccines in the United States are expected to be trivalent. These will be replacing the use of quadrivalent vaccines seen in previous years.

The upcoming vaccine protects against three flu viruses: an A(H1N1) virus, an A(H3N2) virus, and a B/Victoria virus. Both trivalent and quadrivalent vaccines are anticipated to offer similar protection. Since B/Yamagata viruses haven't circulated since March 2020, the protection from both vaccine types is expected to be equivalent.

A combined flu and Covid shot is now in the late trial stages. The vaccine is made by Moderna and has shown promising results in its final stages of testing. This single vaccine will protect against both viruses, making it much easier to keep up with your vaccinations. By rolling the Covid-19 booster and the annual flu shot into one, it aims to increase vaccination rates and cut down on the hassle of multiple

doctor visits. Health experts are hopeful that this combined shot will help more people stay protected and reduce the spread of these illnesses.

If everything goes well, this combo vaccine could be ready for the upcoming flu season.

In a significant move to enhance public health, the FDA has recently expanded the age approval for the RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccine. Previously recommended for older adults, the RSV vaccine Arexvy by GSK is now approved by the FDA for at-risk individuals aged 50 and older. This expanded age approval aims to protect a broader segment of the population from RSV, a virus that can cause severe respiratory illness. However, this change will only be fully implemented once it receives approval from the CDC and ACIP. At this time, the expanded age approval applies specifically to GSK's Arexvy and not to Pfizer's Abrysvo. Once it is approved by the CDC and ACIP, Kohll's Rx will promptly make the Arexvy vaccine available. Pfizer's announced in April that Abrysvo had positive top line results for the MONEt (RSV Immunization Study for Adults at Higher Risk of Severe Illness). A clinical trial which evaluated Abrysvo's immunogenicity and safety data in adults aged 18-59 at increased risk of for RSV. Pfizer submitted the full data to the FDA

from the 18-59 population and anticipate an approval as early as Q4 2024.

In addition to getting the covid, flu, and RSV vaccine, health experts also recommend getting the pneumococcal vaccine (Prevnar 20). Prevnar 20 is a vaccine designed to prevent disease caused by pneumococcal bacteria. It contains 20 different types of pneumococcal bacteria and helps the body develop immunity to these strains. The vaccine is administered to children at 2, 4, 6, and 12 through 15 months old, as well as to older children and adults who need protection. Criteria to receive this vaccine are as follows:

For Adults:

- Age 65 and older: All adults in this age group are recommended to receive a dose of Prevnar 20.

- Age 19-64: Adults in this age range with certain underlying medical conditions or risk factors, such as chronic heart, lung, or liver disease, diabetes, alcoholism, smoking, immunocompromising conditions, asplenia or splenic dysfunction, cochlear implants, or cerebrospinal fluid leaks.

For Children:

- Children younger than 2 years: Prevnar 20 is typically administered in a series of doses at 2, 4, 6, and 12-15 months of age.

- Children aged 2-5 years: Unvaccinated children or those who have not completed the series and have certain medical conditions should receive Prevnar 20.

According to the CDC, RSV hospitalizes up to 175,000 people aged 65 and older each year, leading to approximately 12,000 deaths.

With the new Covid variant spreading rampantly throughout the U.S, Covid-related hospitalizations have seen an increase. These rising trends underscore the importance of timely vaccination to mitigate severe illness and hospitalizations during the upcoming respiratory virus season.

It takes approximately two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body, making it crucial to get your respiratory vaccines early, before seasonal activity begins. For convenience, it is possible to receive the Covid booster, RSV vaccine, and flu shot simultaneously.

Senior care centers, assisted living facilities, and skilled nursing homes often partner with companies like Kohll's Rx to administer all three vaccinations to their residents. Kohll's Rx is authorized to administer vaccines without a prescription, offering a simple and convenient way to protect the elderly population.

As we approach the fall and winter seasons, ensuring timely vaccination against Covid-19, flu, and RSV is crucial for protecting public health. With these vaccines readily available, Americans can safeguard themselves and their loved ones against these significant respiratory threats.

You Can

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Report Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly or Vulnerable Adults

Call **1-800-652-1999**

Nebraska Adult Protective Services



*Calls can be made anonymously

Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom is coming to The Durham Museum

The Durham Museum is teaming up with Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom to showcase the history behind

the television show that pioneered nature and wildlife programming, as well as the all-new television series, Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom Protecting the Wild, that continues to highlight stories of conservation success.

From gear and original scripts to new technology and artifacts used in filming, the exhibit gives visitors a glimpse into Wild Kingdom and its origins. Also featured are behind-the-scenes stories and highlights of the work currently happening to

inspire the next generation of conservationists.

Since its network television premiere in 1963, Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom has been one of the most loved and respected wildlife programs in television history. The show took viewers to the far corners of the world and studied wild animals in their natural habitats. Hosts Marlin Perkins, Jim Fowler and Peter Gros wrestled anacondas, swam with sharks and were chased by a herd of elephants. They provided a

look at an often-unseen animal world and emphasized the importance of conservation while creating family-friendly entertainment.

Gros has recently returned to co-host Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom Protecting the Wild alongside Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant, now airing Saturday mornings on NBC.

For museum hours and more about the Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom exhibition, please visit www.DurhamMuseum.org.

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mary@hiattagency.com



hiattagency.com
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How Nebraska's new voter ID law will work

Nebraska's new voter ID law (LB514) requires all registered Nebraska voters to present a photo identification (ID) when voting in an election in the state of Nebraska.

Every election in Nebraska after the May 2024 primary will require voter ID.

Photo IDs:

- Nebraska driver's license (from DMV).
- Nebraska state ID (from DMV).
- Nebraska college ID (public or private).
- Nebraska political subdivision ID (state, county, city, school, etc.)
- United States Passport.
- Military ID.
- Tribal ID.
- Hospital, assisted-living facility or nursing home record.

ID must have your name and photo. ID can be expired.

How voter ID will work:

- Voting in person at the polls: Present a photo ID or

vote provisionally.

- Voting early at the election office: Present a photo ID or vote provisionally.

- Voting early by mail: Write driver's license/state ID number on ballot application or enclose a copy of photo ID or reasonable impediment certification with your ballot application.

- Voting in by-mail precincts or by-mail special elections: Write driver's license/state ID number on ballot return envelope or enclose a copy of photo ID or reasonable impediment certification in your ballot return envelope. Active-duty military members, active-duty military spouses, and citizens overseas covered by UOCAVA (Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) are exempt from voter ID.

If you forget your ID, you will fill out a provisional ballot.

For your ballot to count, you will need to present a photo ID to your county

election office on or before the Tuesday after the election.

If you don't have an ID, you can get a state ID for free (for voting purposes) from the Nebraska DMV.

You will need to bring certain documents to get a state ID, so check with the DMV website ahead of your visit.

If you need a copy of your birth certificate to get a free state ID, you can get a free certified copy of your Nebraska birth certificate from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

This is only available if you do not have an ID and need a state ID for voting purposes.

If you cannot get an ID due to disability/illness, religious objection to being photographed, or lack of documents to obtain a free state ID, you can complete a reasonable impediment certification.

Visit VoterID.Nebraska.gov for more information.

Cultivating the environment starts now

When most folks think of the environment, their mind may wander to the kinds of birds that flutter to their birdfeeder, what types of plants and trees grow in their yard, or perhaps the world's flora and fauna as a whole. Humans collectively maintain the Earth in acts big and small—from replanting groves of trees to mowing the lawn and everything in between. But what maintenance do you perform for your personal environment?

The spaces you live, work and simply exist in have a major impact on your sense of well-being. Here's how to empower yourself through your surroundings.

Your ideal environment? Where you feel most like you. The University of Minnesota puts it best: "Personal environments do not exist in isolation."

How could you possibly thrive in a place where you don't feel like—or aren't allowed to express—your most authentic self? It's easier to tailor aspects of your home to your specific preferences, but might prove more difficult when you're around others that don't understand your humor, nuances and self-expression.

Your social connections are an extension of your personal environment, which means spending time with people you are comfortable around will fulfill your emotional needs. Thus, when someone preaches to "surround yourself with positive people," you might want to take their word for it!

The best part of your environment: It's fully customizable. If you don't feel fulfilled with your current settings, you can make changes at any time. Consider the implications of each decision and how they might bring you joy, or alleviate you from unnecessary stress or grief. Whether it's a small purchase—like a soft blanket

to make your days feel cozier—or a major life change—like phasing out of a relationship or adopting a furry friend—you know what's best for you.

Self-care takes up a major space in your environment. As you tend to yourself with acceptance, kindness and forgiveness, the way you perceive yourself may change and bloom.

Your personal environment will transform as you age. Did you know that both your youngest and oldest years are most formative in shaping your identity? It's crucial to ensure that your physical surroundings are up to par, not only during these stages of life, but throughout. A study ran by The Gerontologist found significant correlation between older adults' environments, quality of life measures and mortality rates by observing participants' housing, neighborhood, traffic levels and interactions with neighbors. Therefore, you're doing yourself a favor in the long run when your living situation helps you feel safe, sheltered and at ease.

Lincoln recently received the AARP Age-Friendly Community designation, which means plans are underway to make Nebraska's capital city more accessible for aging adults to live and thrive in. When Seniors live joyfully and age gratefully, many others can feel empowered to do the same.

Karl Marx has been preaching it since the mid-1800s: "Man is the product of his environment." When your choices brighten your own life, you may feel compelled to show openness and kindness to others in turn. Enjoy the opportunity to Cultivate a better world.

This health tip is brought to you by Tabitha.

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:** The Center is Closed -Happy 4th of July
 - **July 11:** Lunch N Learn with Archwell Health – "Living with Breathing Issues" @ 11:45 a.m.
 - **July 12 & 19:** Learn how to play Hand & Foot @ 10 a.m.
 - **July 17:** John Worsham performs from Merrymakers @ 11:45 a.m.
 - **July 19:** Book Club meets @ 12:30 a.m.
 - **July 23:** Presentation by Alecia Stepp with Humana @ 11:45 a.m.
 - **July 25:** Jack Pot Bingo @ 12:15 p.m. No Tai Chi July 3, 4, 9, 11, 16 & 18
- Every Wednesday – Chair Volleyball @ 10 a.m.
Every Monday – Card Game: Manipulation @ 10 a.m.
Every Monday – Pickleball @ 10 a.m.
Grab N Go meals are available.
For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or barbara.white@cityofomaha.org.

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.

Omaha Fire Department

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

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

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

 American Red Cross

FREE SMOKE ALARMS



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1-833-422-1751

Or visit
redcross.org/smokealarmNE
redcross.org/smokealarmIA



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FIRE FACTS

2 MINUTES
to get out
of your house

7 TIMES A DAY
someone dies
from a house fire

EVERY 40 MINUTES
a fire injury
is reported

PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES.

INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS.

MAKE A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN.

Summer safety tips along with fun activities for older adults

By Paula Crozier

As temperatures rise and summer kicks into full swing, older adults are urged to take precautions to stay safe and healthy in the heat. According to a recent article by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), heat-related health dangers for older adults soar during the summer months, making it crucial for seniors to be aware of potential risks and to take appropriate measures to protect themselves.

The NIH emphasizes the importance of staying cool and hydrated to prevent heat-related illnesses such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion, which can be particularly dangerous for older adults.

Seniors are advised to stay indoors during the hottest parts of the day, typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and to drink plenty of fluids, even if they do not feel thirsty.

Older adults may have

several health-related factors that can be exacerbated by the heat including:

- Age-related changes to the skin such as poor blood circulation and inefficient sweat glands
- Heart, lung, and kidney diseases, as well as any illness that causes general weakness or fever
- High blood pressure or other conditions that require changes in diet, such as salt-restricted diets
- Reduced sweating,

caused by medications such as diuretics, sedatives, tranquilizers, and certain heart and blood pressure drugs

• Taking several drugs for various conditions (It is important, however, to continue to take prescribed medication and discuss possible problems with a physician.)

- Being substantially overweight or underweight
- Drinking alcoholic beverages

• Being dehydrated

In addition to staying cool and hydrated, older adults can also enjoy a variety of fun summer activities that are both safe and enjoyable.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Water Aerobics: Water aerobics is a great way for older adults to stay active and cool off at the same time. Many community centers and gyms offer water aerobics classes specifically designed for seniors.

2. Nature Walks: Take advantage of the milder temperatures in the early morning or evening hours by going for a leisurely nature walk. Enjoy the beauty of the outdoors while getting some exercise in a shaded environment.

3. Picnics: Pack a healthy picnic and head to a nearby park with friends or family. Enjoying a meal outdoors can be a relaxing way to spend time together while taking in the sights and sounds of nature.

4. Gardening: If you have a green thumb, gardening can be a rewarding and therapeutic activity. Spend some time tending to your garden, planting flowers, or growing your own fruits and vegetables.

5. Indoor Activities: On especially hot days, opt for indoor activities such as visiting a museum, going to the movies, or trying out a new hobby like painting or crafting.

By following these summer safety tips and engaging in enjoyable activities, older adults can make the most of the season while staying healthy and well. Remember to listen to your body and take breaks as needed, and don't hesitate to seek medical attention if you experience any symptoms of heat-related illness.

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

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Flaherty Senior Consulting

Join Flaherty Senior Consulting for a series of Solutions Group gatherings that will address the questions and challenges caregivers face.

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

Upcoming meeting dates and locations are:

• **July 9, Sept. 10,
Nov. 12**

St. Vincent de Paul Church
14330 Eagle Run Dr.

• **July 27, Sept. 28,
Nov. 30**

Faith Westwood
United Methodist Church
4814 Oaks Ln.

• **Aug. 1, Oct. 3,
Dec. 5**

The Servite Center of Compassion
72nd St. and Ames Cr.

• **Aug. 21, Oct. 16,
Dec. 18**

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.

Visit flahertyconsulting.net or call 402-312-9324 for more information.

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

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

La Vista Senior Center

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

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

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

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

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

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

This Month's
Sudoku Answers

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

This Month's
Crossword Answers

Attorney General warns public of new 'Pig-Butchering' scams

Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird issued a warning to Iowans about a rise in "pig-butchering" scams.

In a pig-butchering scam, con artists build trust with their victims and "fatten them up" for a rip-off by flirting or developing a friendship over a long period of time.

Often, scammers will first reach out over social media messaging apps and find common ground with their targets. The con artists then tell a story to convince the innocent victim to send money through cryptocurrency, where the money cannot be tracked or retrieved.

A recent example out of southeast Iowa serves as a stark reminder of the dangers of online scams. A 69-year-old man was befriended by a scammer posing as a young woman on Facebook. The scammer, who went by "Delia" from Illinois, talked with the man on Facebook messenger and over the phone for months to build the man's trust.

They bonded over common hobbies such as cooking. She then persuaded him to send money through Bitcoin, making him believe that the money was going to a pretend investment company. He started with just \$1,500. But when the scammer sent fake screenshots of investment statements showing he had made \$750,000 off of it, he continued to increase his investments.

He invested a total of \$164,000. The

man even borrowed against the titles of his two Harley Davidson motorcycles. This scam came at a time when his wife had just lost her job, and they could have used the money more than ever.

PIG-BUTCHERING SCAM TACTICS:

- Scammers connect with Nebraskans on social media or dating apps, pretending to flirt or build a friendship.

- They build a relationship with their victims over time, often for weeks or months before asking for money or "investments."

- After building a trusted relationship with their victims, scammers will tell them a story to persuade them to send money through cryptocurrency.

How to Protect Yourself:

- Be wary of connecting with strangers online, and do not accept friend requests from people you do not know.

- Do not send money through cryptocurrency. Once that money is gone, you cannot get it back.

- Seek advice and do thorough research before making an investment.

- Do not send money to people you do not personally know. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

If you or someone you know has been targeted by a pig-butchering scam, contact the Nebraska Attorney General's office at 402-471-2682 or file a complaint online: www.https://ago.nebraska.gov/.

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ENOA

Escape room games keeps older adults minds sharp

As you get older, it does not mean one needs to let go of the excitement in life. There should always be new things to engage in life, and escape rooms are the best to set that example.

With multiple themes, they will always have something fun to look out for.

“Escape rooms are a great way to get out of the house, they can expand your horizons and they keep your brain flexible,” owner of Industrial Escape Rooms, Pat Corbitt said. “You can only watch so much television, plus escape rooms help people stay mentally active.”

An escape room is a physical adventure game, which players solve a series of puzzles and riddles using clues, hints and strategy to complete the objectives at hand. Players are given a set time limit to unveil the secret plot which is hidden within the rooms.

Inspired by “escape-the-room”-style video games, games are set in a variety of fictional locations, such as prison cells, dungeons and space stations, and usually the various puzzles and riddles themselves follow the theme of the room.

“It tests your knowledge – we do get seniors that come in here, but I believe everyone should go to an escape room,” Entrap Games general manager, Tony Paredes said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Engaging in an escape room adventure can improve hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, and overall physical dexterity. Additionally, the physical component of the game can contribute to a moderate increase in heart rate and blood circulation, promoting cardiovascular health.

Escape rooms have become popular in North America, Europe and East Asia since 2010.

Permanent escape rooms in fixed locations were first opened in Asia and now can be found in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Escape rooms are great

team-building activities for families, friends, students and even businesses.

Escape rooms are now known to be a particular popular among highly stressed adults and over-worked professionals.

“When you solve a puzzle, your brain releases endorphins. An escape room

will allow opportunities for an endorphin rush. It gives you an opportunity to interact with the people you are with in the room,” Corbitt said. “It challenges you to think outside of the box.

You have to look at a variety of objects and you have to determine if the objects are a part of the game or if they

are there for decoration.”

Corbitt is currently offering a discount for seniors at Industrial Escape Rooms if you enter the code: ENOA-10 for 10% off. For more information, contact Corbitt at 402-934-2083.

To learn more about other discounts, check your nearest escape room location.

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



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

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.

They also provide health and nutrition programs.

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

Ralston Senior Center

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

- **July 3, 17 & 24:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
- **July 10:** Board meeting @ 9:30 a.m.
- **July 11 & 25:** Bingo @ 1 p.m.
- **July 31:** Music provided by Bill Crastil from Merry-makers @ noon

Lunch is catered in on Wednesdays @ 11:30 a.m. A \$5.50 contribution is normally suggested for the meal. Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday. Games and bingo will be played after lunch. Contact Darla @ 402-331-1529 for reservations. Obtain an annual Ralston Senior Center membership for \$10.

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