



New Horizons

Dick Mueller's Firehouse Dinner Theatre put the Omaha's Old Market on the map

By Leo Adam Biga

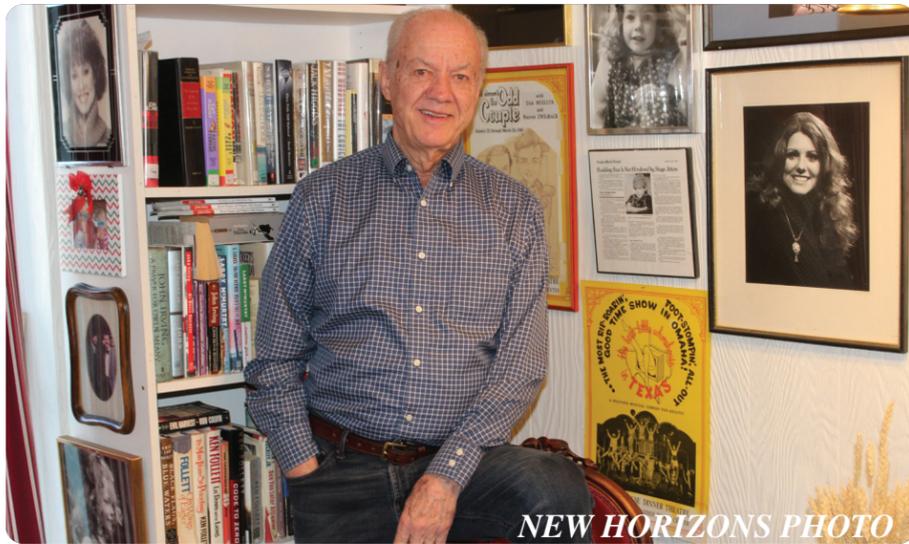
Dick Mueller, 85, is awash in memories of the Firehouse Dinner Theater, the equity house he opened in 1972 in his hometown Omaha's then-fledgling Old Market. He repurposed a former fire station at 11th and Jackson into the theater, which proved, Mueller said, an "instant success," hastening the district's transition from derelict wholesale produce center to cool arts-entertainment hub.

Before the Firehouse, he followed a circuitous show business path as a nightclub performer and stage actor. His musician father played trumpet in his own Mueller Rhythm orchestra, in which Dick's older brothers played. Dick played trombone in the Omaha Central High band, but his true talent was singing.

"My first hero was probably Bing Crosby," he said.

Mueller sang in the choir at Central, where he and fellow teenagers Rich Hansen, Bill Snyder and Bob Larsen formed The Stylemasters doo-wop quartet. Patterned after The Mills Brothers, they shined in Central's annual Road Show and around town. They decided to try their harmonizations out west.

Singing groups were all the rage and after testing the waters at a resort in Sun Valley, Idaho, the quartet signed with the Hammond/Romeo



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

talent agency in Omaha, touring Canada and the U.S., opening for Sophie Tucker in Winnipeg. They were a hot number at the Chi supper club in Palm Springs. They sang on the nationally televised Arthur Godfrey show in 1957. Their one chance to play Las Vegas was interrupted by a U.S. Army hitch.

Meanwhile The Stylemasters cut singles on the Foremost label. That led to a Capitol Records deal.

The members got drafted into military service in 1959. "Our military career was kind of interesting," Mueller said. "We had to go through basic (training), but as soon as that was over we joined the U.S. Army Field Band in Washington D.C. as the featured act."

While in the service they signed with Epic Records, changing their name to The Bachelors and releasing "The Bachelor's Club"/"Do The Madison."

"We came close to having some hits, but we were late to the game," he said. "We had a good run though."

EPIPHANY

While in New York for a recording session, Mueller found himself in the theater district. "I bought a standing room ticket for \$3 and saw the original production of *My Fair Lady*. Until then," he said, "I had no idea what theater was. I thought the ultimate entertainment experience was in a nightclub. It really changed

my life, those three hours." He said he learned magical theater moments "have to do with what happens between a playwright, a good director and good actors telling a good story," adding, "It doesn't happen very often, but you've got to have some, otherwise you stop going back to the theater."

He booked *The Bachelors* at a Wichita club that they always sold out at, to test their commitment to touring clubs. They still packed the place, but the thrill was gone. "I knew it was over. We all felt the same way."

Back home, stage fixtures Norm and Louise Filbert and Rudyard Norton took him under their wing. Mueller got cast as Tony in *West-side Story* at The Chanticleer Theatre, then in *Bye Bye Birdie* at the Omaha Community Playhouse and in *The Fantastiks* at the old Jewish Community Center. "That's quite a baptism for somebody who'd really never trod the boards before," he said. "That solidified my love for the theater."

He made his living from an Old Market shop, Dictates, he and business partner Rusty Harmsen opened. "We were kind of pioneers down there," Mueller said. "I really loved the Market back then. There were no franchises."

--Firehouse continued on page 9.

The stage for the FEI World Cup™ Finals in Omaha is set

By Ron Petersen

The Omaha Equestrian Foundation welcomes the world's best Jumping, Dressage and Vaulting competitors as they are set to host the FEI (Federation Equestrian International) World Cup™ Finals on April 4-8 at the CHI Health Center.

This year's event will mark the second time that Omaha will serve as the host for the FEI World Cup™ Finals. More than 52,000 spectators, representing 38 countries and all 50 U.S. states, were in attendance for the four-day event at the CHI Health Center in 2017. Since the FEI World Cup™ Finals is back in a prime location, even more spectators are expected to attend the event this time around.

"Omaha is such a natural fit for this event," Omaha Equestrian Foundation CEO, Julie Boilesen said. "Horses are a part of our legacy and are a part of our history. The audience really feels the connection, especially the mature audience, for those who have parents or grandparents who live on a farm."

The FEI World Cup™ Finals 2023 stands to build off of the 2017 success as the Vaulting Final makes its North America debut. Vaulting is a visually exciting equestrian discipline that intertwines the acrobatics of gymnastics with showmanship, joining Jumping and Dressage as the three events at FEI World Cup™ Finals.

"You are looking at the very best --World Cup continued on page 8.



Entertaining activity: Bingo!

Bingo is a fun activity to play and can be played around town. Learn more about the Blondo Bingo hall and the other ways to play bingo in Omaha on **Page 16**.

Games played at LaVista Sports Complex

Softball leagues for players ages 50 and older

By Christine Shank

No one is too old to play softball, not even you. Haven't played in a while? There are indoor practices going on now and there will be outdoor practices for you to tryout your skills as soon as weather is permissible.

Senior softball is growing in the Omaha Metro area.

There are people who drive from Dunlap Iowa, Fremont and Lincoln area, just because it is that much fun. You can play in one league or in all three leagues.

- The NE/IA Friday Morning Senior League (FMSL)
- The Nebraska Senior Softball League
- Tuesday Morning Senior League

There are two leagues held during the day and one league during the evenings.

All three leagues are draft leagues, have special safety rules and they are for men and women over 50 years old. The morning leagues had



COURTESY PHOTO

Three local softball leagues for players ages 50 and older feature special safety rules, registration periods, divisions and player drafts.

someone who was 86-years-old last year.

The Tuesday Morning Softball League started in 2022 with five teams but hoping for six or more in 2023. This league drafts teams for 10 weeks, then redrafts for another 10 weeks to

meet different softball players. The price for all 20 weeks is \$40.

The Friday Morning Softball League normally has seven to eight teams playing for 20 weeks. The price for this league is very reasonable.

The Nebraska Senior Softball League plays on Monday and Wednesday nights. They have over 16 teams with all teams playing on both nights.

All senior softball leagues will be played at the La Vista sports complex at 7629 Josephine Street, La Vista NE, 68128.

Anyone interested in playing senior softball should contact:

FMSL:

braton2001@yahoo.com

- **Monday/Wednesday Night League:** gpabennar@gmail.com

- **Tuesday Morning League:** jtczuba@hotmail.com

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The Sarpy County Historical Society oversees and operates the Sarpy County Museum in conjunction with the county government. The society has a long and proud tradition of working with community partners to preserve and promote the rich history of the area. The society continually provides educational opportunities for the young and old in the community through our partnerships with local community schools, guided tours, and ongoing program offerings.

Sarpy County Museum releases renderings of their new facility

The Sarpy County Museum has released design renderings for its new state-of-the-art facility to be located at the southwest corner of 90th Street and Highway 370 in central Sarpy County.

Designed by TACK architects, the proposed 28,000-square-foot museum would include space for the current materials held by the Sarpy County Museum, the addition of the renowned Wimmer Railroad Collection, rotating display space, support space and proper museum storage. The new location would provide accessibility, walkability, adequate parking, and great visibility to attract the public.

The new facility would provide the museum with ideal space to share the history of Sarpy County's early residents, agriculture, transportation, military, and local communities.

The museum's current train depot and caboose, along with an engine from the Wimmer Railroad Collection, would frame an outdoor plaza between the buildings for events and picnic space.

"Sarpy County is a leader in many ways in both our state and nation. It has a rich history that deserves to be shared in a modern facility," said Ben Justman, Sarpy County Museum Director. "TACK architects has brought our vision to life in these renderings. Our next step is to earn our community's support to make this new museum a reality."

The new Sarpy County Museum facility is estimated to cost \$15 million. The Sarpy County Museum Board has kicked off its capital campaign, themed "Celebrating Human Ingenuity in the Heartland," to raise the funds needed for the project. The campaign's first milestone will be to raise \$1 million to purchase the three-acre site at 90th Street and Highway 370. The campaign has begun engaging prospective donors and supporters throughout Sarpy County and beyond.

If you are interested in learning more or supporting the project, visit www.Sarpy-Museum.org and view "Plans for Expansion."

Dealing with change can be difficult

The changes in Shelley Wallen's mobility changed so gradually over twenty years. It made it difficult for Shelley and Warren to pin point when getting in and out of the shower changed from being difficult to actually being unsafe.

A conversation with her therapists was a wake-up call to make a desperately needed change. Now the couple has

Phillips a beautiful, safe, functional shower to use now and in the future.

Shelley and Warren were raised northeast of Souix City, Iowa. Friends convinced them to move to Omaha in 1980 for better weather. They loved Omaha with all of its theater, restaurants, activities, and friendly people. When Shelly stopped work in nursing and Warren retired as a pharmacist, they were happy to retire in Omaha.

Shelley has had arthritis for over thirty years. Her ability to walk easily has decreased as difficulty with her knees has progressed. When Shelley and Warren moved into their ranch style home in 2000 there was an attractive whirlpool tub. It wasn't long before Shelley found that she could not climb out of it.

The shower in the bathroom was fairly small and half the entrance to it was blocked by the toilet. To make getting in and out of the shower even trickier, the traditional design of the fiberglass shower created a step up to get in and a step down to get out. There were no grab bars. It wasn't a problem for Warren but it was a significant challenge for Shelley that gradually got harder and harder.

The couple thought about making changes in the bathroom as years passed, but weren't really sure of what to do, or how to find a contractor they would feel comfortable with.

During a hospitalization and subsequent rehabilitation Shelley was asked about her home showering ability by her therapists. She realized then, that she hadn't actually had a safe shower for about 20 years.

Shelley's therapists provided her with resources including the company Med-Right Home



PHILLIPS PHOTO
Shelley Wallen is able to sit securely in the shower.

Modifications. Shelley and Warren reached out to Katie and Doug at Med-Right Home Modifications and quickly felt they'd made a good connection. Warren recalled that one thing he appreciated was Doug telling him that they could remodel the bathroom based on what Shelley could do at the moment, but that it was smarter to build for her needs now and for at least five or ten years down the road.

Warren proudly related that, "The shower that was built is designed so that we could put a wheelchair in there if we ever get to that stage."

The previous tub and shower were removed in order to make enough space within the existing area of the original bathroom for both a large, low threshold shower and maneuvering room for a person with mobility equipment. A person using a walker or a wheelchair can get near the new shower, toilet, and double sink. There is also enough room for a helper if that is necessary, even though Shelley doesn't need that help since the remodeling.

Shelley's favorite part of the shower besides being able to get in and out of it so easily, is the seat which is both comfortable and secure to sit on. With the seat and a hand held shower she is able to shower independently.

The rectangular seat is a little wider and deeper than American with Disabilities Act Guidelines would suggest. Those guidelines can often be considered a minimum with private residential remodeling.

The size seat she has provides great support for her as she moves around while washing.

The Med-Right Home Modifications designers chose the specific height of the seat for her as well. The tall height makes standing up easier but she can still keep her feet securely on

the shower floor for stability while bathing. Warren flips the seat up so that he can enjoy a traditional standing shower.

The shower is not the only fixture that makes the bathroom work for Shelley. The toilet was shifted into the area where the old shower had been to provide more room around it.

Grab bars and a tall toilet made even taller with a riser help her move on and off the toilet steadily with ease.

The sink countertop is a little higher than standard which works well for Shelley as she is tall and stands at the sink now. The extra height while not very noticeable at all will make it easier to convert the sink to a roll under sink with fewer plumbing changes if she wants that in the future.

Warren is very happy with how well the bathroom works for Shelley and uses the room himself with no complaints.

His favorite feature however is the barn style door. Barn style refers to the type of hardware that allows a door to slide back and forth along the wall instead of swinging in and out of a room.

It is a beautiful, trendy type of door that doesn't take up any maneuvering room as the door is opened and closed.

At Warren's request, the door actually looks like a barn door.

He said this makes him think fondly of his childhood home.

Shelley has been enjoying the freedom and peace of mind that her shower gives her for two years now.

When asked if there was anything she would have changed about the process, she laughed and said not really except starting sooner.

"We talked about it and never got around to it until my disability got worse. I made do and managed as well as I could," Shelley said.

Things are better now and she won't have to make do in the future either.

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

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New Horizons

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Ralston Senior Center

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

- **March 1:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
- **March 8:** Board meeting @ 10 a.m.
- **March 8:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
- **March 8:** Book club @ 1 p.m.
- **March 9:** Book club @ 1 p.m.
- **March 15 & 22:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.
- **March 23:** Bingo @ 1 p.m.
- **March 29:** The Merrymakers present music by Kim Eames @ noon

Lunch is catered in on Wednesdays @ 11:30 a.m. A \$5 contribution is normally suggested for the meal. Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday. Play games and bingo after lunch. Contact Diane @ 402-885-8895 for reservations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Respite Across the Lifespan

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

Caregivers are not immune to this stress.

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

First United Methodist Church

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

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

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Tips to improve mental health

By Shelbi Cotton

Mental Health is often something that does not get spoken about. This is an important part of life that helps you socialize, make rational decisions, have a healthier body, and be able to deal with day to day issues.

Below are steps that can be taken to help improve your mental health.

- Being more positive, grateful, and forgiving

Having a more positive outlook on life can help your perspective on life. This does not mean that you never feel any other emotion except positivity, but you just do not let the other emotions overrule it. Being grateful is a way to see more of the better things in your life. You can do this by thinking to yourself of the good things that you have in life or you can journal, write things down that made you happy that day. This is a significant habit to do daily. Per Mental Health America, people who forgive people are more satisfied with their lives.

• Eating and Drinking Habits

Eating a more balanced meal of fiber, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can improve your mood. Avoiding trans-fat and sugary foods. Foods that contain a lot of sugar will cause your blood sugar to rise. When your blood sugar decreases, this can make someone feel fatigued and irritable. 95% of the body's serotonin is made in the gut, which is a hormone that affects your mood in a positive manner. Caffeine is

widely consumed. Drinking this later in the afternoon or evening can affect how well you sleep.

• Physical Activity and Sunlight

Establishing a schedule and exercising routinely can improve blood flow to the brain, decrease symptoms of anxiety or depression, increase production of endorphins (this helps alleviate stress), and help you maintain a healthy weight. Vitamin D is produced by sunlight. Only 15 minutes of this can positively affect your mood.

• Socializing, Laughing, and Finding a purpose

Having a healthy support group and strong connections with other people help reduce the amount of stress in your life. Doing good things for the community, such as volunteering, can improve life satisfaction. Having meaning behind what you are doing can give you a sense of fulfillment in your life, which could lead to feeling happier. Laughter is an easy way to reduce anxiety.

• Coping Mechanisms

Stressful or unpleasant situations are bound to happen in life. Developing healthy coping mechanisms can help you process these situations. A great quote from Martin Luther King Jr states "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step." This means to take small steps to get to your goal.

• Relaxation Methods and Meditation

Finding ways to relax and meditate can improve blood

pressure, ability to focus, understanding, muscle tension, and stress. Find a place that is quiet, where you are open-minded and comfortable. There are several different ways to relax, such as, progressive relaxation, guided imagery, biofeedback, self-hypnosis, and deep breathing exercises.

• Owning Furry Friends

Being around animals or owning your own pets have great benefits for your mental health. It can lower your stress, and increase your "feel good" hormone. If you are unable to own a pet, you can help out at the local shelter.

• Alcohol and Smoking

Drinking alcohol and smoking can cause a chemical imbalance, which can cause you to be more stressed and have more anxiety. It is best to avoid smoking, and drink in moderation, if any.

Concerning mental health signs and symptoms:

- Mood and energy levels
- Wanting to be left alone from loved ones
- Eating habits change
- Start drinking or smoking more often
- Feelings of confusion, forgetfulness, anger, numb, have an "I don't care" attitude, and worried
- Thinking of hurting yourself or other people.

If you experience any of these symptoms or any symptom that is off from your baseline, contact your doctor as soon as you can. They will be able to get you the help that you need, whether it is through medication or therapy.

Drug, alcohol deaths on the rise among older Americans

Drug and alcohol abuse have impacted seniors in the United States, as it has among younger Americans. Over 5,000 people ages 65 and over in the U.S. died of a drug overdose in 2020, and more than twice that many (11,616) died of alcohol-induced causes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted data that included drug overdose deaths in adults aged 65 and older between 2000 and 2020.

- Between 2000 and 2020, age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths for adults aged 65 and over increased from 2.4 to 8.8 deaths per 100,000 standard population.

- For men aged 65–74 rates of drug overdose deaths were higher among non-Hispanic Black men compared with Hispanic and non-Hispanic White men.

- For women aged 65–74, drug overdose death rates were higher for non-Hispanic

Black women compared with Hispanic and non-Hispanic White women, but for women aged 75 and over, non-Hispanic White women had the highest rates.

- The age-adjusted rate of drug overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids other than methadone (such as fentanyl) for adults aged 65 and over increased by 53% between 2019 (1.9) and 2020 (2.9).

In 2020, alcohol-induced causes were recorded as the underlying cause of death for 11,616 adults aged 65 and over.

Alcohol-induced death rates were higher for men than women in 2020—3.4 times higher for age group 65–74 and 4.1 times higher for 75 and over.

From 2019 to 2020, age-adjusted rates increased by 9.5% for Hispanic adults, 46.5% for non-Hispanic adults, 19.7% for non-Hispanic Black adults, and 19.0% for non-Hispanic White adults.

Nebraska state senators debate proposals impacting older adults

By Andy Bradley
Contributing Writer

Legislative proposals that would enhance broadband access statewide, eliminate state taxes on Social Security, and safeguard seniors from on-line predators are among a dozen or more bills of interest to seniors being debated this winter at the Nebraska legislature.

This is the first year (long session) of a two-year budgeting and legislative cycle for the Unicameral.

Various senior advocacy organizations are promoting their agendas, which range anywhere from creating a state dementia director with the Department of Health and Human Services, to capping the monthly cost of insulin at \$100.

Of considerable interest to seniors is a bill (LB 641) that would accelerate the existing timetable for eliminating all state income taxes on Social Security income by January 1, 2024. Current law calls for the phase out by 2025. The OpenSky Policy

Institute argued against the bill during its Feb. 3 public hearing before the Legislature's Revenue Committee. Joey Adler Ruane, the Institute's policy director, said the bill would cost the state \$168 million a year in revenue, and that most Nebraskans already pay no income tax on their Social Security earnings. LB 641, he said, would benefit wealthier retirees, which comprises a small minority of seniors.

In 2021, for example, Social Security benefits were not taxed for joint filers with a federal adjusted gross income of \$59,960 or less.

LB 683, introduced by Sen. Suzanne Geist of Lincoln, chairperson of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, would create the Nebraska Broadband Office and the Director of Broadband, which would be a governor appointee. The bill would set into motion the mechanisms required for the state to accept and administer nearly \$100

million in federal funding in the coming years to enhance internet connectivity for those in underserved or unserved areas. An estimated 15 percent of Nebraska towns or neighborhoods, and 67,000 of its citizens, have no or limited broadband access, according to the America's Communication Association (ACA).

Danny DeLong, a volunteer spokesperson for AARP Nebraska, told senators that "available, affordable and reliable broadband coverage is essential to the health and wellbeing of older Nebraskans."

He said older persons are more susceptible to social isolation and need broadband (internet connectivity) to connect socially, to shop, and to stay informed.

LB 468, introduced by State Senator Wendy

--Proposals continued on page 6.

Call Marsha at 402-444-6536

ENOA is recruiting volunteers to become Ombudsman Advocates

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

ENOA's Ombudsman advocates visit residents in local long-term care facilities and assisted living communities to protect the residents' rights, well-being, and quality of life.

Long-term Care Ombudsmen advocates must complete 24 hours of initial classroom training and 18 hours of additional training every two years.

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

Before being assigned to a long-term care facility or an assisted living community, new volunteers will make four visits to a site with an experienced Ombudsman Advocate to learn more about what the program entails. After a three-month probationary period, the new volunteers are certified as Ombudsman Advocates.

Certified Ombudsman Advocates will be assigned to a long-term care facility or an assisted living community where they'll visit for two hours a week to meet with administrators, residents, and the residents' family members to address concerns.

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

Intercultural Senior Center

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

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

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

Merrymakers presents Joe Taylor, on March 17th at 12:30 p.m.

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

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

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

Afternoon Jewelry classes are coming soon. Call for more information.

For more information, please call 402-444-6529.

Eclectic Book Review Club

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

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

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

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

Authors for spring 2023 include:

- March 21- Jody Keisner. Under My Bed and Other Essays
- April 18- John Price. All is Leaf: Essays and Transformations
- May 16- Timothy Schaffert. The Perfume Thief

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

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

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Please see the ad on page 3

New Horizons Club gains new members

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Paula Stanton

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Rita Bianchi
Gary Merrifield
Carole Yanovich
Gertrude Crouch

\$15

Nancy Szynskie

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Tamara Marks
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Gerontology research study

The University of Nebraska Omaha's Department of Gerontology needs older caregivers for an individual with mild cognitive impairment, Alzheimer's disease, or frontotemporal dementia for a research study titled *Characterizing Risk Factors for Burden in Caregivers to Individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and Frontotemporal Dementia*.

The study will examine differences in burdens for caregivers who provide support to recipients with frontotemporal dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Although caring for patients with both types of dementia can result in caregiver burden, it may be caused by different behavioral and psychological issues.

Compensation is available for participants who must be ages 50 or older, an unpaid family caregiver for five or more hours per week for at least six months, able to comprehend written and spoken English, and have completed at least two hours of high school.

Men and women will be excluded from the study if they have a neurological or psychiatric disease, abuse drugs or alcohol, have vision, hearing, cognitive, or motor difficulties, are pregnant or breastfeeding.

For more information, contact Naomi Adjei at 402-554-5961 or ABELabUNO@gmail.com.

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

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

For complete program details call 402.991.0330 or visit Immanuel.com

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--Proposals continued from page 5.

DeBoer, representing District 10 in northwest Omaha, would create the position of State Dementia Director within the Department of Health and Human Services. The position would support persons with dementia and their caregivers, as well as coordinate the efforts of the Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementia Advisory Council.

Governor Jim Pillen's budget includes this position. Members of the Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony on the bill Feb 9.

Supporting the bill was Nick Faustman from the Nebraska Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. He said 35,000 Nebraskans are living with Alzheimers or other dementias.

"I was elated to see a position included in the governor's budget," he said.

Also backing the proposal was June Ryan, speaking on behalf of AARP.

"I served as a caregiver for my spouse with Alzheimer's," she said. "I would have appreciated a bill like this during that time."

Kierstin Reed, President and CEO of Leading Edge Nebraska, an advocacy and support organization for long-term care facilities, said the new position is critically needed. She said the Alzheimer's Advisory Council, which was created under law last year, has yet to meet and desperately needs the support and coordination the new position would provide.

"Dementia needs to become a priority," she said. No one testified in opposition.

Senators Feb. 9 also heard testimony regarding **LB 353**, which would provide grants to long-term centers for facility upgrades. Proponents said improvements are necessary in order to accept more persons with acute care needs being dismissed from hospitals.

Currently, many nursing facilities cannot accept complex acute transition patients because they don't have the necessary infrastructure, according to several testifiers. **LB 353**, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Jane Raybould, would establish a \$25 million grant fund, which would award \$250,000 grants to qualified

facilities. Grants would be used to fund equipment and facility modifications such as wider doorways and thresholds, lift equipment, vans, beds and ventilators. Supporting the proposal was Margaret Woeppel of the Nebraska Hospital Association.

She said typically more than 200 patients at any given time are waiting a week or longer to transition from a hospital to a post-acute care facility. Sen. Raybould, promoted the bill as "economic reinvestment in rural communities."

She said care facilities are "often the largest employer in the community," but many of them are struggling to survive.

Several other bills could impact older Nebraskans. **LB 106**, introduced by Omaha Sen. Mike McDonnell, would create the offense of digital grooming of a vulnerable adult, and prohibit using an electronic communication device or social media to deceive vulnerable adults. The bill is endorsed by the Nebraska Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

LB 200 would allow the importation of certain prescription drugs from Canada. The bill, endorsed by AARP, is a "step in the right direction" toward reducing the cost of prescriptions for seniors, said Todd Stubbendieck, the Nebraska state AARP director.

AARP also backs **LB 142**, introduced by Sen. Tom Briese, representing District 41 in western Nebraska, which would cap the cost of prescription insulin drugs at \$100 for a 30-day supply. **LB 57**, introduced by Omaha Sen. Machaela Cavanaugh, would create a paid family and medical leave insurance program. This would provide partial wage replacement for eligible workers who are caring for a family member experiencing serious illness, among other situations.

For more information about these and all bills pending before the Nebraska Unicameral, or to submit your written comments for or against any legislative proposal, visit nebraskalegislature.gov. Nebraska Public Media provides live streaming video of all Unicameral proceedings, and can be also accessed at nebraskalegislature.gov.

More participants are needed for UNMC's study on scam vulnerability

According to reports, nearly 1 in 3 Americans have fallen victim to a scam in their lifetime.

Over the past year, approximately 23% of Americans have been exposed to a scam and the US population has collectively lost 29.3 billions of dollars.

During the past decade, there has been a significant increase in solicitations targeting senior citizens.

Elder fraud and abuse are real threats that are impacting not only overall life quality but also the length of life of older adults.

The Nebraska Office of the Attorney General lists many common forms of scams, including charity fraud, grandparent scam, home repair scam, internet scam, and sweepstakes/foreign lottery. These solicitations may ask for donations, ask for assistance, advertise services or products that are not needed, or worse, do not even exist, among other things.

The Division of Neuropsychology in the Department of Neurological Sciences at the University of Nebraska Medical

Center (UNMC) is currently conducting a federally-funded research project on how changes in practical judgment and problem solving skills may impact older adults in terms of susceptibility to scam and fraud.

The researchers are currently recruiting individuals aged 60 to 90, with or without cognitive impairment, to examine the role of cognition, brain structures, and genetic factors on susceptibility to scam and fraud victimization.

The study involves one or two visits and does not require any follow up visits over time. Eligible participants will undergo a brain imaging study (MRI), cognitive testing, and genetic testing, at no cost, with compensation for time. Ultimately, by identifying when and how changes in practical judgment occur, the researchers are hoping to help prevent victimization for this vulnerable population.

Interested individuals can find out more information about the study by calling 402-559-3158 or by emailing wnl@unmc.edu.

Over-the-counter hearing aids are finally available

By Noah Kuszak

Odds are, you know someone that has experienced some form of hearing loss. It's estimated that 37.5 million American adults have experienced some sort of hearing loss. Up to 28.8 million of those adults could benefit from hearing aids, but only 16% have ever tried them.

For many, cost and accessibility has been a barrier to getting hearing aids, but this is now a thing of the past with new over the counter (OTC) hearing aids.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR OTC HEARING AIDS?

Your first question may be who can get their hands on these new OTC hearing aids. Anyone over the age of 18 that has perceived mild to moderate hearing loss can purchase OTC hearing aids.

Here are some signs that you or someone you know may be experiencing hearing loss:

- Speech or other sounds seem muffled.
- You have trouble hearing while in a group or if there is a lot of background noise.
- You have trouble hearing others during phone calls.
- You ask others to speak slower, talk clearer or louder.
- Asking others to repeat themselves often.

- Turning up the volume on the TV or radio louder than others around you.

Most people with hearing loss qualify, but the new devices aren't for everyone. They may not have enough power to aid someone with severe hearing loss.

Additionally, due to the "one size fits all" model of these devices, a physical deformity of the ear would require a custom fitting with an audiologist.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF OTC HEARING AIDS?

Hearing loss is a serious condition. Not only does it decrease quality of life, but studies have shown that it leads to loneliness, isolation, and may even increase the risk of dementia. OTC hearing aids enable individuals with hearing loss to take back their lives so that they can enjoy them to their fullest. These devices not only significantly improve the lives of people with hearing loss, but they are also cheaper and much easier to get than typical prescription hearing aids.

Prescription hearing aids cost on average about 4,600 dollars per pair and as high as 12,000 dollars.

For many Americans, this would make it their third largest purchase behind a home or car.

(David Kohll of Kohll's RX)

AARP Nebraska Information Center opened in February

AARP Nebraska announced the AARP Nebraska Information Center, located in the Omaha Center Mall at 1941 South 42nd Street, has reopened after being closed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The AARP Nebraska Information Center is a volunteer-led office in Omaha that works to strengthen the community and make life better for people as they age by acting as a centralized clearinghouse for information about programs and services both through AARP and the local community.

"We are excited to reopen the Information Center in Omaha and I know our volunteers are happy to be back in the office and providing information about AARP and other community resources to Omahans age 50-plus," AARP Nebraska State Director Todd Stubbendieck said.

The AARP Nebraska Information Center answers frequently asked questions about AARP programs and services, distributes useful information on a wide range of topics important to people age 50-plus, and hosts AARP Nebraska and

partner-led events and programs.

The office in the Omaha Center Mall will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The new Information Center phone number is 402-916-9309.

AARP is the largest non-profit, nonpartisan organiza-

tion dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.

AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, personal fulfillment, and financial stability.

Live life to the fullest, we'll take care of the rest.



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- Medicare/Medicaid
- being a tenant
- homestead exemptions
- reverse mortgages
- POAs

Legal Aid of Nebraska is here to help!

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

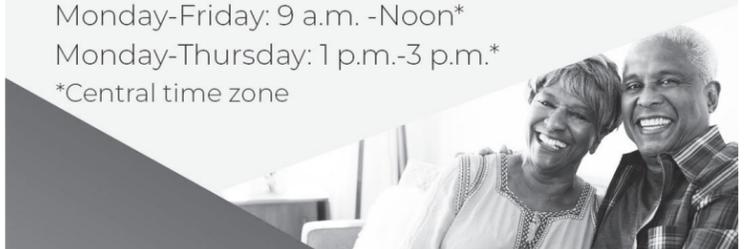
Reach our ElderAccessLine® toll-free at:

1-800-527-7249

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

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

*Central time zone



CD rates are on the rise.

Have you checked them out recently?

Term	Annual percentage yield (APY)*
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Annual Percentage Yield (APY) and rates shown are as of 1/10/2023. CD rates are subject to change without notice.

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COURTESY PHOTO

In the month of January, the Bellevue Senior Center hosted the Chinese New Year party and WINTER WINGo. In February, the center will host a Valentine's Day Party and more. For more information, visit the Bellevue Senior Center website or Facebook page.

Bellevue Senior Community Center hosts Chinese New Year, WINTER WINGo

The Bellevue Senior Center didn't let the January winter blahs slow them down.

The center has had fun celebrating the Chinese New Year with students from Bellevue University. The students arrived in their country's formal attire as they brought music and games.

"The seniors loved learning how to use chopsticks, listen to interesting facts on Chinese culture, tradition and music," said Kathy Van Den Top, manager of the Bellevue Senior Community Center. "The students then wrote the senior's name for them in English and Chinese as a take home gift."

The center's second event was the WINTER WINGo – a winter bingo game. Instead of numbers, the bingo card had words as-

sociated with winter.

"This month we were fortunate enough to be sponsored by a Thrivent Lutheran group for our prizes," Van Den Top said. "Although some may win more than once, everyone is a winner – because everyone was able to take home a prize. Seniors stayed and enjoyed lunch at the center."

In February, the Bellevue Senior Center made fleece blankets on Mondays, hosted breakfast pizza, played Super Bowl Bingo, held a Valentine's Day Party along with all the regular daily activities.

For more information on future events held at the Bellevue Senior Community Center, go to the Bellevue Senior Community Center website, follow them on Facebook or call them at 402-293-3041.



Care Management Services

Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging



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

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

Ask for "Information and Assistance"

for more details about Care Management services.



--World Cup continued from page 1.

— this is the indoor world championships, and it is more exclusive than the Olympics," Boilesen said.

In addition to the competition schedule, the FEI World Cup™ Finals 2023 will include shows, exhibits and demonstrations, VIP amenities and on-site shopping. Links to Native American culture, designated and designed under the counsel of Bluebird Cultural Initiative, will be incorporated within each auxiliary entertainment element.

The theme, "1723," will pay homage to the Great Plains horses' cultural impact by infusing tributes to Native American heritage into educational and entertainment programs.

"We looked at our theme, '1723' which we thought would be authentic about Omaha. We forget that horses are native to this country. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase these horses coming back to North America," Boilesen said. "The theme needed to be completely unique — this is a chance to give our Native American neighbors a chance to give their side of the story and how it fit into their culture. There's an opportunity to bring in a commonality to connect with this local population."

Fans should also expect a free education expo in the convention center adjacent to the competition arena. Additionally, fans will be able to check out the athletes' warm-up ring and a tradeshow with more than 100 vendors.

"Even if someone doesn't buy a ticket to watch the competition in the arena, they should still come down to the CHI (CHI Health Center)," Boilesen said. "The Omaha Equestrian Foundation will look at all kinds of opportunities for equestrian in the future. We love bringing people from around the world to Omaha to enjoy this sport."

While the COVID pandemic might have cancelled the FEI World Cup™ Finals two out of the last three years, planning for this event has been difficult, but it is all starting to come into fruition.

"Ticket sales have been terrific so far — it's interesting to plan anything right now, but we are expecting a huge event," Boilesen said. "In 2017, it was the last time this event was held in North America, so there's tons of appetite for people to come back to Omaha."



COURTESY PHOTO

The FEI World Cup™ is the world's premiere individual series for equestrian competitors. The best human and equine athletes around the world progress through qualification rounds during the months leading up to the FEI World Cup™ Finals to earn their chance to compete for the prestigious World Cup title. Dressage, Jumping and Vaulting will be the three main events showcased at the FEI World Cup™ Finals 2023.



--Firehouse continued from page 1.

Harmsen created Old Market staples Mr. Toad's, Billy Frogg's and Spaghetti Works.

Already bitten by the acting bug, Mueller left Omaha again, this time to try the New York theater scene. He landed a summer stock gig in Saratoga.

"Ten big shows in ten weeks and I played the lead in almost all of them. It was a killer. If you can survive that, you can survive anything."

He found acting work closer to home at the Chanhassen Dinner Theatres in Minnesota. There, he met an actress, MariJane Sullivan, who became his wife and the mother of their two children. Intrigued by the dinner-and-a-show model, he researched an operation in Denver to inform his "wild-haired notion to open a dinner theater in Omaha."

Before pursuing his dream, he and MariJane played opposite each other in a Playhouse production of *Man of La Mancha* that earned them the prestigious Fonda/McGuire Award named after its famous alumni, Henry Fonda and Dorothy McGuire. Years later, Mueller accepted the state's highest tourism honor, the Henry Fonda Award, for "the leadership, vision and dedication" that made the Firehouse a must-see experience. Mueller soon intersected with not only the legacy of Fonda, but the man.

PLAYING WITH FIRE

Mueller raised the money to buy the former fire station, now home to Upstream Brewery, as the site of his theater. Since he couldn't afford to build a kitchen, Hap Abraham catered the food. The opening show was *Butterflies are Free*.

Mueller adapted as a personal philosophy something a New York acting coach taught him about the 'now' moment. "Try to be aware of the potential of the moment because we live our lives in moments," Mueller said. "At the Firehouse one moment led to something else, which led to something else, which led to something else." His association with Fonda is a perfect example. He met the iconic actor backstage after a Broadway performance of Fonda's one-man show, *Clarence Darrow*. When Fonda performed it in Omaha, the Firehouse hosted a tribute night for him.

"There was a dinner and some speeches," Mueller recalled. "The American Bar Association named him man of the year for his portrayal of Darrow. Henry came up to speak. It was a lovely night. I loved the fact it was done at the Firehouse. It was a big night for the theater. Hank wrote me a lovely thank you note."

Dick and MariJane joined Fonda and wife Shirlee for a private dinner at the home of Harold and Emmy Gifford (Emmy founded the children's theater that became The Rose).

Fonda even showed up for a private Firehouse tour. "I showed him around," Mueller said. "He was quite enamored with it."



COURTESY PHOTO

Dick Mueller (left) and Dale Wasserman pose for a picture in front of the cast for "Shakespeare and the Indians" in 1982.

Mueller once visited the Fondas at their Bel Air home overlooking Catalina Island.

"An incredibly beautiful view. And there was Henry Fonda out back in jeans and T-shirt working with a spade in his garden, sweating like a stuck pig. He was a farmer. He kept chickens because he thought their poop was good for the garden. He made his own honey. I spent the whole damn day with them. They were very nice. Then Hank excused himself to get cleaned up and dressed to go do *The Tonight Show* (with fellow Nebraskan Johnny Carson)."

But the Fonda connection didn't end there. It extended to a close friend of the actor's – playwright, stage and film director Josh Logan (*South Pacific*) – who came into Mueller's orbit through Leland Ball, the director of dozens of Firehouse shows, including the world premiere of his own *Red Dawg*. It became the theater's biggest box office success. Years earlier, Logan directed Fonda in his greatest stage triumph, *Mister Roberts*. Mueller mounted a Firehouse production of it, admitting he shamefully stole from Fonda's performance as the title character.

Mueller and Logan hit it off so well the artist came to Omaha to direct two of his earliest Broadway hits, *Nothing But the Truth* and *Charley's Aunt*. In a revue, Logan regaled audiences about his rich life and career, from studying with Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theatre to directing Marilyn Monroe in *Bus Stop* and Marlon Brando in *Sayonara* to living-working with manic depression. Mueller was proud to call the stage-screen legend "my friend."

"Josh loved working here. He wrote a beautiful open letter to Omaha about the theater. He was beautiful to work with. He was a sweetheart."

The book for the show that netted Mueller the Playhouse's Fonda award, *Man of La Mancha*, was written by Dale Wasserman, who came into Mueller's life via Logan. The writer was another hero of Mueller's. "I was just smitten with that show (winner of multiple Tony Awards). I was desperate to see the original Broadway production

but never got around to it. Finally, MariJane and I found ourselves in New York, where it was still playing, but the original cast had long since left the show."

At the matinee they attended, the couple and the rest of the audience were delighted when announced that the original cast was back for that performance.

"That was a religious experience for me," Mueller said.

The Firehouse ended up staging the world premiere of Wasserman's *Shakespeare and the Indians* starring American Old West folk balladeer Bobby Bridger. "We were very proud of that," Mueller said. "It ran for 16 weeks." There was talk of taking it to Broadway, but it never happened.

IN THE MOMENT

Mueller's penchant for pivoting at a moment's notice to tackle new opportunities fit with his spontaneous, living-on-the-edge nature.

"We were a dinner theater doing world premieres of original new work. That was very unusual. Dinner theaters didn't have the budgets and the courage to take the risk of doing that."

Responding as the spirit moved him, he said, "enabled us to take on some exciting shows."

His Golden Boy instincts made the Firehouse a leading Omaha tourist stop, with theatergoers coming from all around the Heartland, many bussing in as groups. He takes pride in the fact the Firehouse became a Midwest destination.

"I think we had a lot to do with the acceptance of the Old Market as a safe, popular place to go."

He agrees with a New York Times writer who wrote that the Firehouse and the Old Market "grew up together," each helping legitimize the other.

At its peak, Mueller said, the theater grossed close to \$2 million annually, drawing tens of thousands of patrons. The Wine Cellar was a popular bar-eatery that operated downstairs.

Many Nebraska natives who went on to acting fame got their start at the Firehouse, including Dick Christie and John Beasley. Mueller, who's acted in movies and commercials, acted there himself.

"When we first started I thought of myself as an actor.

I acted in 20 shows those two decades, so it wasn't really an ego trip for me. I didn't think of myself as a director at the beginning, but I became a pretty damn good director. I loved casting, too."

He sometimes joined the Firehouse Brigade pre-show, whose singers-dancers doubled as wait staff.

Wearing multiple hats as actor, director, producer and entrepreneur, he said, suited his personality.

"That's why it was so perfect for me. I wanted to do it all, but I wanted to do it at my pace because it was my ball and bat."

He was among the founders of the Omaha affinity organization that today is called the Theatre Arts Guild or TAG. It advocates for theater artists and recognizes their work with an annual awards program.

The independent-minded Mueller is not much of a joiner. "I'm a strange cat. I don't like committees."

END OF AN ERA

Dinner theaters were once abundant in America. Omaha was home to several. None remain here today and scant few remain anywhere. The appeal of taking in a dinner and a show wore off as people's lives got busier and the idea of a four or five hour experience became a hard sell.

For more than a decade, Mueller put on whatever struck his fancy and audiences filled the seats. By the end, he said, "it became more, what the hell can we do that will sell tickets?"

By the late 1980s, Mueller struggled drawing crowds and keeping the theater afloat. It got so bad, he declared bankruptcy. In a last gasp effort to try and save it, he turned it from a for-profit to a not for profit with a board to answer to.

"Looking back on it, it was a folly, a fool's game for me to go that route. It didn't work. I don't like the nonprofit world."

By the time the theater closed in 1991 and its fixtures got auctioned off, he and MariJane had divorced.

He married actress Patricia Kies. "Our lives were the theater," he said. The couple were part of Great Plains Theatre Conference new play readings. They co-starred in the 2007 Blue Barn Theatre production of Edward Albee's *Seascape*.

"That piece of material really spoke to me," Mueller said. "I loved doing it."

At this point, he said, "I would only consider taking a part in a show I really want to do with people I really want to work with. Otherwise, I don't need to be on stage anymore. Pat doesn't either. We've done it."

He makes nostalgic posts about the Firehouse, complete with play bills, on Facebook. "It's fun. People seem to love it."

He's digitizing the theater's extensive archive to make it searchable. "Maybe online is the last repository for all that memorabilia."

Volunteer Connect offers a variety of opportunities

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

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

- Men and women are needed to write greeting cards of encouragement for residents living in skilled care and assisted living facilities.
- The American Cancer Society wants volunteers to help provide food and to perform other duties at its Hope Lodge Nebraska.
- Volunteer quilters are needed to create Busy Lap Blankets for long-term care facility residents.
- The Creighton University Medical Center-Bergan Mercy Hospital wants volunteers to take a dessert cart to new moms

who recently gave birth and to help out in its mail room.

- The Catholic Charities/St. Martin dePorres Center is looking for volunteers for a variety of duties.
- The Siena Francis House needs volunteers to serve breakfast and lunch.



- Volunteer Connect wants men and women to participate in a focus group.
- Partnership 4 Kids (P4K) is looking for volunteers to serve as Goal Buddies (5th grade) and Group Mentors (6-12th grade).
- Volunteers are needed to knit/sew baby caps/clothing and prayer shawls.
- Boys Town is looking for volunteers to help out at its Visitors Center and Hall of History Museum.

Flaherty Senior Consulting

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

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

Upcoming meeting dates and locations are:

- **March 14, May 9, July 11, Sept. 12, Nov. 14**
St. Vincent de Paul Church
14330 Eagle Run Dr.
- **April 19, June 21, Aug. 16, Oct. 18, Dec. 13**
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
93rd and Dodge streets
- **April 6, June 1, Aug. 3, Oct. 5, Dec. 7**
The Servite Center of Compassion
72nd St. and Ames Cr.
- **March 25, May 20, July 22, Sept. 23, Nov. 18**
Faith Westwood
United Methodist Church
4814 Oaks Ln.

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

Registration is required to attend each gathering. Masks are mandatory and social distancing will be observed.

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

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

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

Fremont Friendship Center

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

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

This month's activities will include:

- **March 1:** Music with Bill Chrastil @ 10 a.m.
 - **March 2:** Presentation from a Registered Dietician from Nye-Mariah Poore, R.D. @ 10 a.m.
 - **March 8:** Music with Wayne Miller @ 10:30 a.m.
 - **March 9:** Mobile Library @ 9:30 a.m.
 - **March 15:** Music Presented by the Merry Maker's-The Links (Mary and Diana) @ 10 a.m.
 - **March 22:** Music with Billy Troy @ 10 a.m.
 - **March 23:** Fremont Therapy Presentation @ 10 a.m.
 - **March 28:** Board Meeting @ 1:30 p.m.
 - **March 29:** Music with Jerry Stingley @ 10:30 a.m.
- Craft Class is every Tuesday from 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Tai Chi offered every Tuesday and Friday from 9:15-10 a.m.

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

Corrigan Senior Center

You're invited to visit the Corrigan Senior Center, 3819 X St. this month for a variety of activities. The Corrigan Senior Center is open weekdays from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Lunch is served at noon.

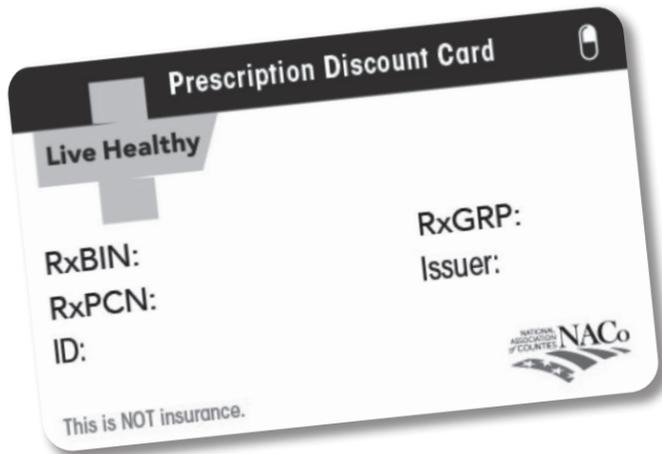
A \$4.25 donation is suggested for the meal. Call 402-731-7210 for more information.

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with the

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

AVERAGE SAVINGS OF 20%!

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

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



For more information
call **1-877-321-2652**
or visit
nacorx.org

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

The importance of sleep

Sleep plays a vital role in your overall well-being. Getting adequate amounts of sleep can help protect your physical health, mental health, quality of life, and safety. Chronic sleep restriction is linked to obesity, diabetes, depression, and cancer.

The recommendation for adults is 7-9 hours every day. Very few individuals require as little as 4 hours a night and very few individuals require up to 11 hours a night.

To know if you are getting an adequate amount of sleep ask yourself:

- Do I feel tired frequently?
- Do I yawn throughout the day?
- Am I sick often?
- Am I excessively stressed?

SLEEP TIPS

Create a Sleep Schedule Routine:

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time (or close to) every or most days of the week.
- Begin winding down

with rituals that help you relax.

- Don't go to bed unless you're sleepy. If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed.

- Try to keep a regular day-to-day schedule.

Food:

- Don't consume caffeine after lunch because it remains in your system for 6-9 hours after consumption.

- Alcohol may help you fall asleep, but will give you a much poorer quality of sleep.

- Avoid any form of nicotine before bed.

Naps:

- Don't rely on naps to get the recommended amount of sleep, use them sparingly.

- Naps last 10-30 minutes, no longer.

Sleep Environment:

- Limit or get rid of any lighting.
- Ideal room temperature between 68-71°
- Create a relaxing environment.
- No blue light technology (laptops, phones, tablet).

- Avoid noisemakers: kids, pets, disruptive partners.

Physical Activity:

- Being active throughout the day will help you to fall asleep faster and stay asleep.

- Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

- Avoid moderate activity 1-2 hours before bed and vigorous activity 6 hours before bed.

Stress Management:

- If you cannot stop a racing mind, get up and write down what you are thinking about.

- Make a to-do list for tomorrow.

- Try to quiet your thoughts or work through them.

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.

Preparing to renew Medicaid coverage

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Medicaid members have kept Medicaid coverage even if they are no longer eligible.

Regular reviews of Medicaid eligibility will restart on March 1, 2023. It will take approximately twelve months to review each member's eligibility.

It is very important that Medicaid members make sure their contact information is up to date with Nebraska Medicaid. If Nebraska Medicaid is not able to reach a member, they could unnecessarily lose Medicaid coverage.

MEDICAID RENEWALS

Medicaid is required by the federal government to review each member's Medicaid eligibility.

If they have all the information they need, Nebraska Medicaid will complete a member's renewal without asking them for information.

Starting March 1, DHHS will begin completing a renewal for each Medicaid member.

It will take approximately 12 months to review everyone.

The goal is to prevent unnecessary loss of Medicaid coverage.

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Completing your renewal: If the DHHS have all the information they need, Nebraska Medicaid will complete your renewal without asking you for information. Once Nebraska Medicaid completes your renewal, they will send you a letter in the mail with the results.

To prevent an unnecessary interruption in Medicaid coverage, make sure your information is up to date. Make

sure your contact information is up-to-date and report any changes to income or household size (divorce, marriage, new children).

You can report these changes in any of the following ways:

- Online at ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov
- Email at DHHS.ANDICenter@nebraska.gov
- Fax at (402) 742-2351
- Over the phone by calling ACCESS Nebraska at:

- Omaha: (402) 595-1178
- Lincoln: (402) 473-7000
- Toll Free: (855) 632-7633
- TDD: (402) 471-7256

You should check your mail regularly. DHHS may send you important information that you need to respond to so you don't unnecessarily lose your coverage. If you have provided your email address and phone number, DHHS will also send you texts and emails when your renewal is coming up.

RETURNED MAIL

If DHHS can't contact you due to returned mail, we will contact you to ask for up-to-date contact information.

ASSISTANCE FROM YOUR HEALTH PLAN

Your health plan (Nebraska Total Care, Health Blue, or United Healthcare) may contact you to confirm your current contact information, assist with your Medicaid renewal, or help you identify other health coverage if you are no longer eligible for Medicaid.

(Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services provided this information).

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Justice Dept. agency
4 Physician's nickname
7 Grating
12 Vintage
13 Away from WSW
14 Mountain crest
15 Set afire
16 Yosemite peak featured in "Free Solo"
18 "CSI" evidence
19 Dewy
20 Billboard
22 Swiss peak
23 Bloke
27 Author Fleming
29 Abrasion
31 Planet circlers
34 Heart line
35 Coffeehouse bill collector
37 L-P link
38 Utah ski resort
39 "Yoo- —!"
41 Pottery oven
45 Quotable Yogi
47 Eastern path
- 48 Bygone Cadillacs
52 Copper head?
53 Tierney of "The Affair"
54 Superlative suffix
55 Texter's chuckle
56 Velocity
57 Irish actor Stephen
58 Decade parts (Abbr.)
- 17 Nile vipers
21 Martial arts warrior
23 Swindler
24 Guffaw syllable
25 Suitable
26 Green shade
28 Simile part
30 Paint container
31 1959 Kingston Trio hit
32 Texas tea
33 Choose
36 Mother of Zeus
37 Gloomy
40 Sequence
42 Tuscany setting
43 Hard work
44 Seasonal songs
45 Thin nail
46 Nick and Nora's dog
48 Ambulance initials
49 Napkin's place
50 Payable
51 Mine material

DOWN

- 1 Creates origami
2 Russian pancakes
3 Luggage attachment
4 Consider
5 Borrowed
6 Director DeMille
7 Engrossed
8 "Exodus" hero
9 Fixed
10 Sch. org
11 Hankering

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						54				55	
56						57				58	

This Month's Crossword Puzzle

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

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

Camelot Friendship Center

You're invited to visit the Camelot Friendship Center, 9270 Cady Ave., for regular activities, which include chair yoga, card games, Tai Chi, chair volleyball, chair Zumba, cornhole, and bingo, this month for the following:

- **March 7:** Fire Department Presentation @ 11:45 a.m.
- **March 9:** Omaha Indian Presentation by Dr. Rudi Mitchell @ 11:45 a.m.
- **March 10:** Council Meeting @ 12:15 p.m.
- **March 15:** Craft Class – Pour Paint Projects @ 12:30 p.m.
- **March 16:** “Music of Ireland” with David Marsh compliments of Humanities Nebraska @ 11:45 a.m.
- **March 16:** Jackpot Bingo @ 12:30 p.m.
- **March 24:** Joe Taylor performs presented by Merry-makers @ 11:45 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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.

More volunteers needed

The Department of Gerontology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha is looking for individuals who are the age of 50 years and older that are currently serving as an unpaid, family caregiver to an individual with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's Disease or Frontotemporal Dementia.

The study will involve one virtual visit for one hour and will be conducted over the internet.

To be eligible for the study, you must be 50 years of age or older and currently serving as an unpaid family caregiver to an individual who is 40 years of age or older with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Frontotemporal Dementia, or Alzheimer's disease, for five hours a week or more, for a minimum of six months.

In addition, to be eligible you should have comprehension of written and spoken English and have completed a minimum of two years of high school or higher.

You are not eligible for the study if you have a diagnosis of a neurological or psychiatric disease (e.g., stroke), history of drug abuse, vision, hearing, cognitive, or motor difficulties, or if you are currently pregnant.

To learn more about the study, contact Naomi Adjei at the Aging Brain and Emotion Lab at 402-554-5961 in the Department of Gerontology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha or by email at ABELabUNO@gmail.com.

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How to determine the value of your house when downsizing

If you are considering selling your house and downsizing, one of your biggest concerns likely wondering what your house is worth.

GROSS VS. NET WHEN SELLING A HOUSE

One of the first items to understand, is the difference between “gross vs. net.”

It can be confusing when an agent says that they can sell your house for



Soucek

amount that a seller will put in their pocket.

When a person sells a house, there are inherent costs, transaction costs, that need to be considered. These are what I call the “realities” of selling a house.

Before I go through the specific transaction costs, I will note that these costs will depend on the current real estate market you are in. If you're in a “seller's market” like recently in 2021 through mid 2022, the costs may be less, as that was a time when it was easy for a seller to sell a house, with lots of buyer demand.

If you're in a “buyer's market,” like back in 2009, the transaction costs may be much higher, if you can attract a buyer to purchase your house at all.

TRANSACTION COSTS TO SELL YOUR HOUSE

Now let's discuss Transaction Costs.

First, you have Marketing Costs. Marketing Costs are an amount that it costs to market a house and find a Buyer. These are typically commissions or fees paid to a real estate agent.

A Seller may choose to market the house themselves, but they will still typically pay or incur a cost to compensate the Buyer's agent. And, it will still take money, time, or both to find a Buyer.

Next, the Buyer's Discount. In most markets, the Buyer's Discount is the reality that most houses do not sell for the original asking price. Buyer's will

typically always offer less than the asking price, and the sale amount will be determined by negotiations between the Buyer and Seller.

Next, the Closing Costs. Depending on where you are geographically, the closing costs will be split between the Seller and Buyer in a local traditional manner.

However, in most markets, the Buyer will typically ask the Seller to pay for some or all of their closing costs. And, a Seller will most likely have to deal with some deficiencies discovered with a whole house inspection and the appraisal for the Buyer's lender. The costs to correct these deficiencies will typically be the Seller's responsibility. If the Seller does not want to correct these deficiencies, it will provide the potential Buyer a way to back out of the purchase, and the Seller will still have these items to worry about when the next potential Buyer comes along.

In most markets, these Transaction Costs can add up to 10% to as much as 15 to 20% of the original listing price of the house. Again, the amount of discount will vary depending on market conditions, the condition of the house, and how desirable your house is to a buyer.

HOUSE CONDITION

The next item that needs to be considered is the condition of your house.

Do you have a house that has been updated in the last few years with new kitchen cabinets, appliances, and hard surface counter tops? New windows and HVAC system? Or, has it been years, maybe decades, since these items have been updated?

As with Transaction Costs, the current market will determine how most potential buyers will take the items that need updating into account. If there is a lot of buyer demand, they may not care as much about items that are dated compared to being in a buyer's or average market.

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

The next item I would like to discuss, is Realistic Expectations.

If a seller has recently had a real estate agent or

appraiser value their house at \$120,000, for example, but most other agents would agree that it could only be sold for \$100,000, the seller already has an inflated expectation of what their house will sell for.

The other part of this equation is, that if an agent or someone else has told a seller that it will only cost \$10,000 for repairs and updates to bring the house up to a “Nice” or “Retail” condition, but it will actually take \$25,000 to \$30,000, this will again create an inflated value expectation in the mind of the seller.

COMPARABLES AND THE CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET

If you're considering selling your house and downsizing, one of the usual best ways to get an idea of the value of your house is to look at comps, or comparables, of houses that have sold in your neighborhood or subdivision.

Typically, an agent would show you comps that are up to 12 months old to provide a good idea of what your house is potentially worth. However, if a person looks at the last 12 months of sales, this will most likely show you comps of the inflated market we had then, compared to what we have now. As I write this, in February, we are in a much different market than 12 months ago.

When looking at comparables, I would recommend looking at the Solds for the last two years, the current Active Listings, and look at the Listings that Expired or were Cancelled to get the best picture of the current market.

The above items should provide a good way to estimate the value of your house if you are considering selling and downsizing. However, the value is ultimately decided between what a Buyer is willing to pay and what you are willing to sell for.

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

Growing in front of our own eyes

Those who grow houseplants know that when the plant ceases to thrive it may mean that it has outgrown the container and needs to be repotted into something larger. In the new pot, roots are no longer bound up and the plant starts to grow again.

Wherever there is growth, there is a need to replace that which no longer accommodates the new growth for something bigger. Children outgrow their clothes and shoes. Growing families need homes with more bedrooms and cars with more seats.

Vegetation needs to be pruned to allow for more space.

This is also true on an emotional, intellectual and spiritual level.

In our youth we developed structures of knowing based on what we were taught and from our first-hand experience. As we gained more experience and listened to new teachers, we necessarily revised our structures of knowing to accommodate these new realities.

Here are some examples of how early structures of knowing were revised.

"There is not a Santa Claus but my parents sacrificed to give me gifts." "My parents don't know everything. That is okay because I can also learn from others." "Being the center

of attention does not get me as far as being a team player."

Fast forward to our Third Chapter. Some may think that the shedding of structures of knowing is only a part of our youth. That is not true.

this kind of growth is portrayed in the recent movie *Women Talking*. In their story a group of women meet in council to decide if what they were told by the abusive men in their colony should be followed. They grapple with the question of

Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

We might say: "I have been doing it this way for my whole life. I am not about to change now."

This is a curmudgeon approach to aging. It stifles social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth. Learning ceases. Life stagnates.

The alternative is approaching each new day as an opportunity to learn new things and to engage with others. In this way we stretch the container of our lives ever larger.

We realize the ideas and beliefs we have carried for years may not be the whole truth.

We discover not all rules and regulations are of equal value, depending on their source and the intention they are meant to fulfill.

We learn to trust our own experience rather than allow others to dictate our thoughts and actions.

A beautiful example of

how to choose life in their difficult and painful situation.

Some of the older women bring much wisdom to the discussion. This is as it should be.

Elders have had many decades to shed old structures of knowing for those that serve them better, making room for more expansive and inclusive ideas. In so doing, elders become fountains of wisdom.

My hope for myself is that my spirit, heart and mind continue to expand so I do not wither away like a neglected houseplant. I don't want to be a curmudgeon.

(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.)

Veterans Affairs benefits will be topic of meeting

Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits is the topic for the March 14 Solutions Group facilitated by Flaherty Senior Consulting. The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Church.

Dave Conrad, business office outreach coordinator with the U.S. Office of Veterans Affairs, will be guest speaker. Conrad will discuss benefits that are available and how to apply. Healthcare benefits will be covered. The meeting is open to anyone interested in learning about benefits for themselves or someone they care for, but registration is required. To register, email Nancy Flaherty at flahertyconsulting@cox.net.

Those attending are encouraged to bring their

DD214 paper.

Flaherty Senior Consulting offers four Solutions Groups, held at various locations, that support family caregivers and answer questions and challenges they face, with a focus on those caring for loved ones with dementia. Groups meet every other month.

Visit www.flahertyconsulting.net for more information on the Solutions Groups and/or private consultations with Nancy Flaherty, president of Flaherty Senior Consulting and a certified dementia practitioner.

For more information, contact Nancy Flaherty, Flaherty Senior Consulting, at 402-312-9324 or flahertyconsulting@cox.net.

Omaha Fire Department

The Omaha Fire Department's Public Education and Affairs Department will install free smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors inside the residences of area homeowners. To have a free smoke and/or carbon monoxide detector installed inside your home, send your name, address, and telephone number to:

**Omaha Fire Department
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Requests
1516 Jackson St.
Omaha, Neb. 68102**

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

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.

FREE SMOKE ALARMS



**To request free smoke alarms:
1-833-422-1751**

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



To help reduce the number of home fire-related injuries and fatalities, the American Red cross, will be installing free smoke alarms to those who register.

 American Red Cross

FIRE FACTS

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someone dies
from a house fire

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a fire injury
is reported

PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES.

INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS.

MAKE A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN.

National Nutrition Month: Eating right for older adults

Healthy eating is recommended throughout life, but as we age certain factors can affect our nutrient needs. Choosing a variety of foods from all the food groups (vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy and protein foods) will help you build a healthy eating routine.

The following tips can help you get started on your way to eating right.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Eat a variety of different colored vegetables, including ones that are dark-green, red, and orange. Beans, peas, and lentils are also good

choices. Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables can all be healthful options. Look for “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” on the labels. Add fruit to meals, snacks or as dessert. Choose fruits that are dried, frozen, or canned in water or 100% juice, as well as fresh fruits.

Make at least half your grains whole. Choose breads, cereals, crackers, and noodles made with 100% whole grains. Whole grain corn tortillas, brown rice, bulgur, millet, amaranth and oats all count as whole grains, too. Also, look for fiber-rich cereals to

help stay regular and cereals that are fortified with vitamin B12, which is a nutrient that decreases in absorption as we age or due to some medications.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese. Older adults need more calcium and vitamin D to help keep bones healthy. Include three servings of fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt or cheese each day. If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or a calcium-fortified soy beverage.

Vary your protein choices. Eat a variety of

foods from the protein food group each week. In addition to lean meat, poultry and eggs, choose seafood, nuts, beans, peas, and lentils when planning your meals. Spread your protein intake throughout the day by including a source with meals and snacks. Protein foods derived from animal sources also provide vitamin B12, and certain plant-based foods may be fortified. If you’re at risk for low levels of vitamin B12, your doctor may also recommend a supplement.

Limit sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Look out for salt, or sodium, in foods you eat. Compare sodium in the foods you buy and choose those with lower amounts. Add spices or herbs to season food without adding salt. Switch from solid fats to oils when preparing foods. Make major sources of saturated fats occasional choices, not everyday foods.

Examples of these include desserts, fried foods, pizza, and processed meats like sausages and hot dogs. Select fruit for dessert more often in place of treats with added sugars.

Stay well-hydrated. Drink plenty of water throughout the day to help prevent dehydration and promote good digestion. Other beverages that can help meet fluid needs include unsweetened beverages, like low-fat and fat-free milk, fortified soy beverages, and 100-percent fruit juices. Choose these more often in place of sugary drinks.

Enjoy your food but be mindful of portion sizes. Most older adults need fewer calories than in younger years. Avoid oversized portions. Try using smaller plates, bowls and glasses.

Cook more often at home, where you are in control of what’s in your food. When ordering out, look for dishes that include vegetables, fruits and whole grains, along with a lean protein food. When portions are large, share a meal or save half for later.

Consult a registered dietitian nutritionist if you have special dietary needs. A registered dietitian nutritionist can create a customized eating plan for you.

(Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics provided this information).

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Tech Tip

Turn your phone off and on weekly to help protect against hackers gaining access to your sensitive information.

This simple step of rebooting your phone won't be enough to stop all data breaches and information theft, but it makes it harder for hackers to maintain access to your phone.

“The One Thing You Need to Do on Your Phone Once a Week, Officials Warn,” Best Life, 28 July 2021, <https://bestlifeonline.com/news-phone-off-on-hackers/>.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides in-person and virtual tax assistance to anyone, free of charge, with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income.

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

Nebraska's Tax-Aide sites opened early in February.

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

To get started go to taxaide.aarpfoundation.org.

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

La Vista Senior Center

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

Meals are served weekdays at 11:30 a.m. Reservations are due by noon the business day prior to the date the participant wishes to attend and can be made by calling 402-331-3455. A \$4.25 contribution is suggested for the meal if you are age 60 and older. If you are under age 60, then the meal cost is \$11.

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

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

Millard Senior Center

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

• **March 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30:** Spanish Class @ 10 a.m.

• **March 8:** Board Meeting @ 9:30 a.m.

• **March 8:** Making sundresses and shorts to be sent to Haiti and to the Orphan Grain Train which serves all over the world @ 10 a.m.

• **March 13:** THEOS (To Help Each Other Socially) @ 12:30 p.m.

• **March 17:** Happy St Patrick's Day

• **March 22:** P.A.W.S (Puzzles and Words with Seniors) Working with Montclair Elementary Students @ 10 a.m.

• **March 27:** Book Club: A Stranger Among Saints by Stephen Hopkins @ 1 p.m.

Line dance Thursdays @ 9 a.m.

Chair volleyball Thursdays @ 10 a.m.

MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.

Dominoes will be served weekly on Thursday's @ 12:30 p.m.

UNMC students visit and play cards with seniors Fridays @ 9.m.

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

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

This Month's
Crossword Answers

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

This Month's
Sudoku Answers

Muscogee (Creek) Nation chef prepares healthy, traditional foods

By Ron Petersen

A chef must be exceptional at what he or she does: Someone who can cook, balance nutrients and provide information about what is good for the human body.

Anthony Warrior, a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, is a chef of traditional foods through his catering company.



"I have the opportunity to pass on my knowledge and reincorporate foods to the Great Plains, while reinventing foods into the traditional food diets," Anthony Warrior said.

Warrior, who is currently the Human Resource Director for Nebraska Indian Community College, owns his catering business called Warrior's Palate.

Over the last 13 years, the 46-year-old has been traveling around to different parts

of the state and Iowa, where he is educating those about traditional ways of cooking food.

"I've been really busy after the pandemic and I am thankful for it," Warrior said.

Warrior has worked with tribes across Oklahoma, in Florida, California and New York.

During his time of working as a chef at casinos in Oklahoma and on the east coast, Warrior was able to learn about the health benefits of nutritious foods, along with doing research to pass along the way.

"It was a really good opportunity to try different cuisines," Warrior said.

Despite working his fulltime job at Nebraska Indian Community College, Warrior still has time for Warrior's Palate.

Warrior cooks up any food request with those special requests, which includes dietary restraints.

To learn more about Warrior, you can email him at SanAWarrior@thenicc.edu.

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ENOA

Cheap, fun amusement in Omaha: Bingo!

By Ron Petersen

During the cold, winter months in Nebraska, it can be difficult to find entertaining activities to do around town.

A fun, yet relaxing, social game to try that most people are familiar with, a popular game being played in town, is Bingo.

“It’s a cheap form of entertainment that could last an entire evening,” Blondo Bingo gaming manager, Jason Brown said.

Bingo is a game of chance using cards on which there is a grid of numbers, a row of which constitute a win when they have been chosen at random. Bingo is one of the most popular forms of low-priced gambling in the world.

Blondo Bingo, which is one of two state regulated bingo halls in Omaha, have hosted multiple generations of bingo players in Omaha since 1985.

On Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings, Blondo Bingo is the place to be for those who want to experience an exciting and fun atmosphere, for anyone to bring their family and friends above the age of 18.

“The older generation of people know that this bingo hall exists. But people of all ages are starting to come back,” Brown said.

Jason Brown, who took over as the gaming manager for Blondo Bingo at the end of 2021, had a plan to help renovate the bingo hall.

“We’ve put in new carpet, tables, chairs, we have 15 60-inch flat screen televisions around the hall, and we also painted the walls,” Brown said.

Blondo Bingo even has an updated concession stand where people can receive a meal along with the basic burgers, hot dogs and pizza.

“A lot of people will come into eat because everything is homemade,” Brown said. “We will serve almost anything.”

A typical night at Blondo Bingo starts with the doors opening at 5 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays, but on Saturdays and Sundays the doors open at 4 p.m.

Bingo players may gather and socialize for the first hour, but an hour before the game begins, they get a chance to buy their bingo boards or machines.

The game will then get underway at 7 p.m. on



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Blondo Bingo located on 8061 Blondo St. is filled every Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday with those who are testing their luck in a game of bingo.

Wednesdays and Fridays, but on Saturdays and Sundays they will begin at 6 p.m.

Bingo players have the opportunity to play up to 34 games in a night that typically lasts a little under three hours.

The cash prizes start with a \$25 winner, which is the smallest of the night. There is a couple of \$50 games, \$75 and \$100 games throughout the evening.

The last game of the night is a \$1,000 jackpot, which is the largest payout allowed.

“The maximum jackpot is regulated by the state,” Brown said.

The other state regulated bingo hall in town is at St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church.

St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church hosts bingo on Monday mornings and Tuesday evenings, which draw various types of crowds.

“We have a more variety of age groups that play bingo,” Jenny Haase, who handles the utilization of funds for St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church Bingo. “We are always pleasantly surprised to see new faces, but we do see new people all of the time.”

About 150 people will attend each bingo session at St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church because of the entertainment, food and comfortable environment.

“It’s totally a social time — I don’t play bingo regularly, but a lot of people do,” Haase said. “It’s fun, relaxing and it includes a social aspect.”

The other form of bingo

people around town have the chance to play is music bingo.

Music bingo isn’t your typical kind of bingo. Instead of numbers, there are song titles on the cards and every time a new song comes on, players can go ahead and mark the song title on their card.

“It’s fun for everyone,” Omaha Music Bingo owner, Shane Major said. “It gets people dancing and it’s a party every time.”

Omaha Music Bingo hosts 14 games a week and you can find their full schedule on the Omaha Music Bingo website.

Whether its regular bingo

or music bingo, the game of bingo is an activity that will be continuously played around Omaha for years to come.

“Popularity wise, I didn’t picture how popular bingo would be where it is today, but it’s been fun and will only get better from here,” Brown said.



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