



# New Horizons

## Mele Mason: Cameras and climbs

By Leo Adam Biga

Insatiable curiosity drives veteran moving image photographer and outdoor enthusiast Mele Mason to document compelling content across continents.

The Omaha adventurer has traveled out of the country every year but two since 1977.

“I’ve always been open and wanting to meet new people, learn about new cultures,” she said. “I love to see different parts of the world. When I travel I want an adventure, I want to experience nature. I want to test myself climbing or biking or hiking. I want to experience the country, I want to experience the people. My career has helped open up opportunities to do that. Often I do it with friends that I use in my films.”

As a freelance network news videographer she’s shot natural disasters, crime scenes, sports events and covered every Iowa caucus since 1996. The recent general election saw her follow the Midwest campaign trail of presidential and senate candidates.

She’s documented mountain expeditions around the world. She’s lit national interviews with billionaire Warren Buffett and chronicled his Berkshire Hathaway shareholders meeting. She’s collaborated with American Gramophone and Mannheim Steamroller founder



COURTESY PHOTO

Chip Davis. She’s shot for ABC and NBC News, Meet the Press, Dateline, Inside Edition, CNN, Entertainment Tonight, Oprah, the History Channel and the Discovery Channel.

She made video inserts for and captured behind the scenes footage of cast and crew on Alexander Payne’s 1999 feature Election.

Creativity runs in the family. Brother Matt Mason is Nebraska’s state poet. Doug Mason is a painter in his spare time. John Mason is a

New York architect. Travel is also in her and her six siblings’ DNA owing to her parents living in South Africa in the late 1950s when her father’s work with Caterpillar Tractor brought the family there during the height of apartheid. Awkward interactions ensued between her parents and Black servants.

Matt’s traveled internationally for his poetry, Doug studied art at the Sorbonne in Paris and oldest brother Gordon Joseph went to work on a pipeline in Alaska, where he stayed

to build a career as an educator and tech expert. Her own wanderlust led her to leave home for college and to circumnavigate the globe for business and pleasure. Siblings have joined her on some adventures. Her first international travel brought her to Japan for a family wedding.

Just as she advocates for her community (as president of the North Omaha Commercial Club) she champions travel.

“It just expands your horizons.”

### FILM FORMATION

Mele was born in Peoria, Illinois, then headquarters to Caterpillar and the family’s home base until the Masons moved to Nebraska when she was five.

The 1975 Westside High School grad’s love of photography emerged early. She marks seeing Alfred Hitchcock’s Notorious as an epiphany.

“I was about 11 and it blew me away. It had such an effect on me. It’s still my favorite movie. As a family we would go to movies at neighborhood theaters to see things like The Music Man and The Sound of Music.”

They also made pilgrimages to local drive-ins.

She saved to buy a super 8 camera. Claymation shorts were her earliest efforts. She advanced to live

--Mason continued on page 9.

## New Horizons



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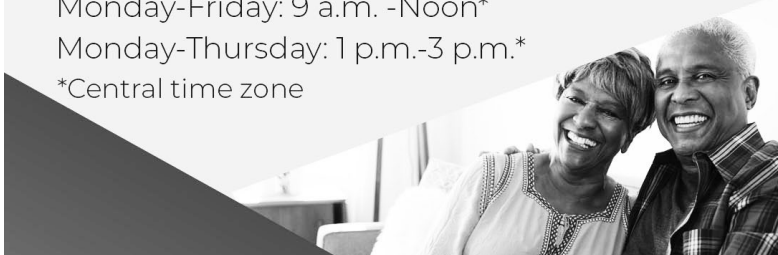
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# Looking back 50 years ago: The 1975 blizzard paralyzed region

By Andy Bradley  
Contributing Writer

It wasn't supposed to be that bad. Four inches maybe. Weather forecasters said the approaching winter storm would threaten central Nebraska but would settle down by the time it swept through Omaha.

They were wrong.

KMTV weatherman Terry Forsberg arrived at the station at 4:30 the morning of Friday, January 10, 1975. As was his norm, he checked forecasts and prepared for his morning on-air pronouncements. As reported in a KMTV retrospective that aired January 12, 2015, Forsberg suspected that the incoming system would have a greater impact than projections made earlier in the week. He contacted the weather professionals at Offutt Air Force Base to confirm his suspicion. He was correct. All inbound and outbound flights had already been grounded, and officials were predicting a particularly hard hit.

A hard hit it was. The snow started falling by 5 a.m. and schools were closed – but businesses were not. As the morning progressed, so did the rate of snowfall and the accompanying winds. Blizzard-like conditions before noon. More and more vehicles became high centered – stuck in drifts that were feet high. These were folks going to work, or attempting to return home from work after Mayor Ed Zorinsky declared a snow emergency. He encouraged businesses to release their employees on a staggered schedule starting at noon.

But the decree came too late. Streets throughout the city were already impassable. Drivers and their passengers abandoned vehicles everywhere – in the middle of 72nd Street, on Dodge, Blondo – just about every major thoroughfare. If it was too far from home, they made it on foot to nearby stores, restaurants, bars, malls, hotels, churches, etc. City officials encouraged public establishments to remain open during the crisis as a safe haven for those caught in the brunt of the storm, which now featured dangerous bone-chilling winds howling up to 65 mph, plummeting the wind chill to zero.

As the day progressed, the Nebraska National



COURTESY PHOTO

### A car is buried in snow after a snow storm passed through in 1975.

Guard was activated, and as reported by the Omaha World-Herald, rescued about 400 motorists. By Saturday morning, after the winds calmed and the snow subsided, 10,000 vehicles remained abandoned on city streets, according to published reports. Five persons had died, most from overexertion attempting to shovel snow or free a vehicle hopelessly submerged in drifts.

Actual snowfall amounts were difficult to determine, due to the strong winds and massive drifts. Reports varied from 12 to 19 inches, depending upon location. While it has been tabbed "blizzard of the century," it wasn't a record snowfall – that belongs to the storm of Feb. 11, 1965, when 18 ½ inches blanketed the city, according to the Omaha World-Herald. Also, the ice storm of October, 1997, was memorable for causing downed power lines, power outages and extensive tree damage. Nine to 12 inches of snow fell throughout the metro – four times the forecasted amount – according to KMTV.

But the 1975 storm remains uppermost in the minds of those who experienced it, due primarily to its unanticipated severity. The blustery conditions causing near-zero visibility quickly caused massive drifting and chaos on the roads, catching the city and its residents off guard. In its aftermath, inspiring stories of heroism and hospitality emerged. New Horizons readers offered examples.

Early that morning, Paula Lamb was on her way to her job at Mutual of Omaha. She lived in Camelot Village near 90th and Blondo. But she tuned around about three-quarters of the way there due to the treacherous conditions that were growing worse by the minute. --Blizzard continued on page 3.

She made it home safely, and settled in to monitor the developing storm from her living room window. In amazement, she observed the vehicle after vehicle slipping and sliding along Blondo Street, many stuck for the long haul. Eventually there were no cars, no sounds of spinning tires, and city streets in her neighborhood were abandoned. "I remember saying this is like a sci-fi movie."

Suddenly there came a knock on her door. An older woman who had become stuck pleaded with Paula to let her use her phone to call her son – no mobile phones in those days. Paula invited the woman in. She placed her call, warmed up and enjoyed casual conversation until her son arrived. Paula was rewarded for her hospitality with three beefsteaks the woman had just bought at the store. "We cooked them up that night."

Paula observed other pedestrians plodding along – some women even protected their heels with plastic bread bags from a local bread store. In particular, she noticed a younger woman trudging with difficulty through the drifting snow. She had no hat or boots and was wearing a dress. "I went out there to ask her to come in to be warm, so she came in." Conditions by that time were so severe that her husband couldn't reach her. "So she spent the night with us."

The next morning, Paula's husband flagged down one of the snowmobilers parading up and down Blondo. He secured an adventurous ride home for the grateful guest.

Rescue operations were common during those 24 hours. Council Bluffs resident Darby Fagan became high centered in his Jeep on one of those infamous hilly

# Celebrating 50 years of service: Bellevue Senior Center

By Ron Petersen

The Bellevue Senior Center, located on 109 W 22nd Avenue is entering its 50th year of existence.

Following the Older American Act of 1965, the first Nutrition sites were opened in 1972. Bellevue opened their center December 7, 1974, at the St. James Methodist Church; paying rent and sharing utilities and janitorial services. During a church remodeling program, the center had temporary quarters in the activities building of the Baptist Church. Upon the return to the Methodist Church, the center continued the meal program and recreational activities.

In April 1983, Pattie Groham, assistant to the City Administrator, wrote a proposal to ENOA for funds to be used for building and equipment purchases.

A committee was formed in June of 1984 to establish purchase priorities. Items identified were equipment for recreational activities, a refrigerator and steam table. The list of items was submitted to the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) for approval June 26, 1984. In 1985, the Bellevue City Council purchased the old AT&T building at 109 W. 22nd Ave as a future sit for a senior citizen center.

Knowing there could be school enroll-

ment increased, which would facilitate the need of the four rooms used for the senior center, the City Council and the Senior Committee began working on a plan.

The Bellevue Senior Citizen Center was incorporated on November 2, 1987, and received its IRS not-profit status on April 18, 1988. Older adults in the Bellevue community made their wishes known to the City Council. In April 1989, the city of Bellevue agreed to completely renovate the unoccupied AT&T brick building and lease it to the Bellevue Senior Citizen Center, Inc.

The 8,000 square foot facility includes a reception area, recreation room, craft workshop, a large multi-purpose room and a complete kitchen. The primary mission of the Senior Center and ENOA is to provide fellowship and nutritional meals for the Bellevue older population.

With the basic premise of the Senior Center to serve a how well-balanced meal to the older adult of the area, the nutrition segment continues to urge older adults to the center for lunch and companionship. When older adults are unable to leave home, the Home Delivered Meal program is available.

The Bellevue Senior Center will host a 50th Anniversary celebration on January 10 at 109 W 22nd Avenue.

--Blizzard continued from page 2.

streets in the Bluffs. Luckily, he was walking distance from a fire station. He unraveled a tow chain from his Jeep and asked the firemen to hook it to their rig to free his vehicle. They declined. "We can't use anything like that for anything personal," Fagan recalled the firemen saying. Seconds later, "three of them came over and they brought snow shovels and shoveled me off the drift. It was one of the nicest things that any public officials have ever done," Fagan said.

Dave McMillan remembers the hospitality provided by Westroads merchants that night. An employee of First Westroads Bank, McMillan was encouraged to wait out the storm in the bank, while the bank manager provided food and drink. But McMillan decided to ventured out after discovering that some Westroads merchants remained open.

"All the restaurants gave free food to everybody that was stranded, and the movie theaters opened up," McMillan said. "I watched the 'Longest Yard' with Burt Reynolds. We actually slept in the theater."

Radio stations were promoting the generosity of Westroads merchants. "There were people coming in snowmobiles to the Westroads," McMillan recalled.

The impact of the storm

wasn't limited to the metropolitan area. Blizzard conditions stretched east from central Nebraska to western Iowa, and north to the Dakotas and Minnesota, which reported 80 mph gusts.

And sometimes that impact was devastating.

Sherry Raymond was 15 years old at the time. She lived with her parents and three siblings in a two-story farmhouse seven miles west of Albion, which is about a two-hour drive northwest of Omaha.

The storm that pummeled Omaha Friday morning had punished central Nebraska overnight. When Sherry woke up, she discovered snow drifts reaching all the way up to her second floor bedroom window. And when her dad pried open the front door, he was blindsided by an impenetrable wall of snow.

The condition of their livestock was an immediate concern.

"Because we milked cows, he had to dig a tunnel all the way to the barn, Raymond said. "We had to scoop the barn out because the whole end of the barn was open." Then, a grim discovery. "There weren't many cows to milk. We had 250 head of cows and we lost 200 of them."

Turns out cattle will travel miles to keep ahead of a storm – a concept known as drifting. "They just keep moving and nothing stops them. They'll go through

every fence to get away from it (the storm)."

That spring, after the snows melted and the frigid temperatures abated, their lost cattle began to surface — some were discovered five miles away.

The loss of 80 percent of the family's herd was devastating to say the least. But what happened next was the final blow for the family. Her dad supplemented his cattle with hogs. "Then we lost all the hogs because they got pseudorabies and we had to shoot them all." (Similar to rabies, pseudorabies is a highly contagious, virally-transmitted disease found in pigs.)

Afterward, her dad abandoned farming altogether, turned the homestead and its 160 acres back to creditors, and moved the family to Wahoo. Sherry graduated from high school there while her dad found work in construction.

So while the blizzard, this so-called "blizzard of the century," may have been a source of inconvenience for many in Omaha, it set in motion a series of devastating events that forever altered the lives and careers of one young family from Albion, Nebraska.

Of the blizzard of 1975 — "I can never remember anything worse than that. We've had a few bad winters here, but nothing like that," Sherry reflected. "Nothing like that."

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## New Horizons

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# Trying different pantry staples

By Laura O'Hara MS, RD/LD

There are not many things worse than going to your pantry and realizing you do not have what you need to make a delicious meal or snack. To create quick and easy meals, it is helpful to have a pantry stocked with the essentials.

You may have heard that shelf-stable ingredients are not the healthiest and that filling the fridge with fresh foods is more important, but that is not always true. By cooking from your pantry, you can save time, money, and a whole lot of stress. These healthy, shelf-stable ingredients are affordable and deserve a designated spot on your shelves.

## THE STAPLES

**Carbs:** Let's start with our grains. They make an excellent side dish or can be combined with proteins and veggies for a well-balanced meal. Whole grains provide us with essential fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

- Oats – are hearty and versatile. Add berries, nuts, seeds, or nut butter to your

oatmeal for an even more filling and nutritious breakfast.

- Rice – an inexpensive and easy carbohydrate to pair with protein and veggies.

- Quinoa – contains filling fiber and protein. Try making this quinoa salad for a light and flavorful meal.

- Whole grain bread – a flexible staple easily incorporated into any meal. Make a sliced turkey and cheese sandwich for lunch, avocado toast with Everything Bagel seasoning for breakfast, or top with a nut butter (peanut, almond, sunflower, etc.) for a tasty snack.

- Whole wheat pasta – Increase your fiber even further with veggies, and top with a protein such as chicken or a turkey meat sauce.

## CANNED AND JARRED FOODS

- Canned goods are sustainable, as they have a long shelf life. The options are endless, from canned soups, proteins, fruits, veggies, stocks, beans, and sauces.

Canned proteins – make

easy lunches with canned chicken, tuna, or salmon. Beans also fall into the protein category and contain healthy fiber, which can be added to taco meat, soups, and stews, or eaten on their own.

- Canned fruits and veggies – eat fruit as a sweet snack, or as part of a sweet treat after dinner. Look for fruits packed in 100% fruit juice. Canned veggies are easy to add to any plate or recipe, such as a casserole or soup.

- Canned tomatoes or jarred tomato sauce – rich in vitamin C and antioxidants. Add jarred sauce to a pasta dish or make your own sauce with canned tomatoes.

**Oils:** Cooking oils like olive, canola, and avocado oil contain heart-healthy fats. These help to lower unhealthy cholesterol levels and improve heart health. Top salads or cereals (hot or cold) with nuts and make healthier dressings with oils and vinegars, and roast vegetables in the oven with oil and seasonings.

**Snacks:** When wanting a healthy snack, don't fear the pantry. Nuts and nut butter are great to keep on hand for heart-healthy fats, protein, and fiber, and can be paired with fruits, whole grain breads, or crackers. When choosing chips or crackers, try a healthier alternative that is lower in fat, such as whole-grain crackers, black bean chips, or sweet potato chips. Pairing these chips with guacamole or hummus will add some flavor and extra nutrition to the mix; or keep a packet of ranch seasoning or French onion soup mix in your pantry to mix in with some plain, non-fat Greek yogurt and make your own high protein dip.

**Mediterranean diet pantry staples:** The Mediterranean diet is a fairly flexible diet

with no strict guidelines. It can help protect your heart, manage your weight, and maintain stable blood sugars. It encourages people to eat more plant-based foods, along with whole grains and heart-healthy fats.

Pantry staples for this diet include:

- Canned fruits – 100% fruit juice, no added sugar

- Canned vegetables – look for low sodium

- Whole grains – brown rice, quinoa, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta

- Beans, legumes, and lentils (try garbanzo beans and green lentils)

- Nuts and seeds – chia seeds and flax seeds can top your dishes

- Cooking oils – olive, canola, avocado

**DASH diet pantry staples:** The DASH diet stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, which is high blood pressure. This diet is similar to the Mediterranean diet as it encourages more plant-based foods and whole grains, but it has more strict guidelines for limiting sodium, specifically. Reducing sodium intake to 2,300 mg/day is recommended, and depending on your goals and your doctor's advice, it may need to be reduced further to 1,500 mg/day.

Pantry staples for this diet include:

- Canned fruits - 100% fruit juice, no added sugar

- Whole grains - brown rice, quinoa, whole grain bread, whole grain pasta

- Low-sodium or sodium-free canned goods - beans, soups, vegetables, tomato sauce, broth

- Low sodium or sodium-free seasonings – ex: garlic or onion powders, Mrs. Dash,

- Chips or crackers stating low-sodium or light in sodium (50% less sodium than regular version)

- Sodium-free: contains less than 5 mg per serving

- Very low sodium: contains 35 mg or less per serving

- Low sodium: contains 140 mg or less per serving

- Tip: Check the Nutrition Facts Label for sodium content. Foods with 20% or more Daily Value (%DV) of sodium are considered high sodium foods.

Pantry staples for diabetics:

A diabetic-friendly diet does not cut out carbohydrates, but instead, it encourages the complex carbs, which are high in fiber and protein. People with diabetes can still keep bread, pasta, and rice in their pantry, but make sure they are whole wheat or whole grain for better blood sugar results. Oatmeal makes for a filling breakfast, which can be topped with nuts, seeds, and nut butter for healthy fats and stable blood sugars. Canned fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups are all still welcome here, but make sure to lessen foods with added sugars. And don't forget to pair a protein with it. Canned chicken, tuna, beans, or chickpeas make for easy and affordable protein sources.

- Tip: Check the Nutrition Facts Label for added sugar content, especially in the cereal and breakfast bar aisle. Foods with 20% or more Daily Value (%DV) of added sugars are considered foods high in added sugars.

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bercriminals. The cybercriminals are trying to steal your personal details and funds.

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

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- If you aren't sure if an email you received is legitimate, contact Eventbrite's customer support directly to verify.

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# A fresh start: Begin preparing for your future move today

By Lesley Brandt  
The Move Coordinators

The start of a new year presents the perfect opportunity for a new chapter in life. For many seniors, this might mean considering a downsizing move, whether to a smaller home, a retirement community, or closer to loved ones. While the thought of such a significant transition can be daunting, it also represents a chance to simplify life, reflect on cherished memories, and embrace a new lifestyle. Starting early and taking manageable steps can ease the process and set the stage for a smoother transition.

## WHY BEGIN NOW?

Even if moving isn't an immediate necessity, preparing in advance offers significant benefits:

- **Reduced Stress:** Early planning allows for a measured pace, avoiding the rush and anxiety of last-minute decisions.
- **Emotional Readiness:** Sorting through possessions can be an emotional process. Starting early provides time to make thoughtful choices about what to keep and let go.

- **Well-Informed Decisions:** Planning ahead gives you time to explore housing options, consult professionals, and develop a plan tailored to your needs.

"The earlier you start, the more time you have to make decisions that reflect your needs and priorities. It's not just about moving—it's about creating a future you feel good about," Senior Real Estate Specialist at Nebraska Realty, Mike Beacom said.

## START SMALL FOR BIG RESULTS

Feeling overwhelmed is common however small steps can make the process more manageable. Tackling one task at a time builds momentum and helps you stay focused. Here are some simple ways to get started:

1. **Sort One Drawer or Shelf:** Begin with a single area, such as a kitchen drawer or a closet shelf. Categorize items into "keep/move", "give", "donate", "sell" and "trash/recycle".
2. **Non-Sentimental First:** Use practical areas like the bathroom or pantry to build confidence before addressing sentimental belongings.
3. **Set a Timer:** Dedicate

10–15 minutes daily to decluttering. Small, consistent efforts yield significant results over time.

4. **Remove Items As You Go:** Don't let the items pile up, move them on. This will help you to see immediate progress in your decluttering process.

## VISUALIZING YOUR NEW SPACE

Understanding your future living space is key to making informed decisions. When planning ahead consider:

- **Space Plan:** If possible, obtain a floor plan or visit your new address. Knowing the size and layout helps determine what furniture and belongings will fit comfortably.
- **Storage Availability:** Identify spaces for items you will move.
- **Accessibility Needs:** Check for step-free access or other modifications.
- **Common Areas:** Plan as necessary for entertaining or socializing in and around your new address.

Having a clear picture of your future lifestyle helps guide the downsizing process.

## DECLUTTERING WITH PURPOSE

Letting go of belongings can be emotional however it's also liberating and ensures items find a new life. Use strategies like the Five-Box Method to simplify the process:

- **Keep/Move:** Items essential or deeply sentimental that you will move to your new address.
- **Give:** Meaningful items that a family or friend could need, use and/or love.
- **Donate:** Belongings that are still in good condition but no longer needed that a non-profit could use.
- **Sell:** Selling valuable items to help offset moving expenses.
- **Trash/Recycle:** Broken or unusable items that are removed for recycling or the landfill.

## PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

If the process feels overwhelming, enlist professionals who specialize in senior moves. Services include:

- **Senior Move Managers:** Experts who handle everything from sorting and packing to arranging your new space.
- **Estate Sale Companies:**

They manage the sale of valuable items.

- **Organizers:** Professionals who streamline decluttering efficiently.

## STAYING POSITIVE

Preparing for your next chapter can be challenging, it also marks a new beginning. Focus on the advantages of downsizing, such as reduced maintenance, safer environment, lower expenses, and more time to enjoy hobbies and relationships. Allow yourself to process the emotions of what is decluttered while celebrating the opportunities ahead.

## CELEBRATE YOUR NEW CHAPTER

Downsizing is more than moving; it's a step toward creating a fulfilling future. With thoughtful planning and a positive mindset, you can transform this journey into an opportunity for renewal. Start small, start now, and take comfort knowing your fresh start awaits.

## La Vista Senior Center

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

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

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

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

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

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- \$93 = The cost to deliver one of forty-four meal routes daily.
- \$100 = The cost of meals for one senior center daily.
- \$208 = The cost of one person receiving a weekly bath for a month.
- \$335 = The cost of mileage for 20 volunteers.
- \$500 = The cost of adult day care assistance for one month.
- Other amount (please designate) \_\_\_\_\_
- Please contact me. I would like to learn more about how to include the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging in my estate planning.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Please mail your donation with this form to:  
**Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging**  
Attn: Hope Houessoukpe  
4780 S. 131st Street  
Omaha, NE 68137-1822  
(402) 444-6536

Please see the ad on page 3

# Thank you to the New Horizons Club members

**\$35**  
Linda Leamer

**\$20**  
Paul Goetz

**\$10**  
Gordon Wellensiek

**\$5**  
Kathleen Koons  
Gaile Clark

## Millard Senior Center

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

- **January 1:** Center is closed New Year's Day
  - **January 2:** Senior Center closes at 1:30 p.m. due to an Open House at Montclair
  - **January 8:** Board Meeting @ 9:30 a.m.
  - **January 8:** Sewing group making sundresses and shorts being sent to the Orphan Grain Train @ 9:30 a.m.
  - **January 13:** Bunco @ 12:15 p.m.
  - **January 17:** P.A.W.S (Puzzles & Words with Seniors) @ 9:30 a.m.
  - **January 17:** Hot Cocoa Day @ 10 a.m.
  - **January 20:** Center is closed for Martin Luther King Day
  - **January 27:** Book Club @ 1 p.m.
  - **January 28:** Banana splits to celebrate Summer in January @ 10 a.m.
- Tai Chi on Mondays and Fridays @ 9:30 a.m.  
Bingo every Tuesday and Friday @ 12 p.m.  
Sportswear Fridays. Wear your favorite team attire every Friday.  
Hand-N-Foot Wednesdays @ 8:30 a.m.  
MahJongg Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.  
Chair Volleyball Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m.  
Dominoes Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.  
For more information, please call 402-546-1270.

## ACT NOW, STAY SAFE: KNOW THE SIGNS OF A STROKE

WHEN IT COMES TO **STROKE**

# BEFAST



**BALANCE** Watch for sudden loss of balance  
**EYES** Check for vision loss  
**FACE** Look for an uneven smile  
**ARMS** Check if one arm is weak  
**SPEECH** Listen for slurred speech  
**TIME** Call 911 right away

**BE FAST. CALL 911.**

nebraskastroke.org

When every second counts, **BEFAST** can save lives!

Affected by stroke and looking for support? Explore a full range of helpful resources at [nebraskastroke.org](http://nebraskastroke.org)



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

During a Senior Companion Program in-service, students from Creighton University discussed normal vital signs, made physical activity recommendations, assessed upper and lower extremity strength and performed balance assessments.

## ENOA creates partnership with Creighton students

By Ron Petersen

Since 2010, Creighton University's School of Health Professions has partnered with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging's (ENOA) AmeriCorps Seniors programs.

The partnership began with the school of pharmacy designating students to present various health-related topics to the volunteers at their monthly in-service meetings.

Students received experience in research and public speaking while providing valuable information to the volunteers.

Soon after this began, the Occupational Therapy faculty and staff conducted Falls Prevention and Balance Clinics.

In 2015, the partnership evolved to working with the Physical Therapy (PT) Department that, other than during the pandemic, has provided the AmeriCorps Seniors with an annual event.

The PT event is intended to enhance service-learning opportunities for the students to have one-on-one experience with aging adults.

Each year at the event, students are matched one-on-one with a Foster Grandparent or a Senior Companion to provide personalized attention regarding their vitals and lifestyle. The volunteers receive useful information on the benefits of good nutrition and exercise.

"We really find that experiential learning is key to helping students become competent health care providers," Creighton University Assistant Professor, Michelle Reilly said. "It is



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

Students from Creighton University completed brief screenings for nutrition and sleep quality on the ENOA volunteers. Based on their findings, the students collaborated with the volunteers to set some wellness goals for the upcoming year.

so important for students to be able to apply the skills that they learn in real world settings in order to make sense of the knowledge that they are gaining in the classroom. They build their critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills as they balance what they know with what the client brings to the table- and this helps them to provide truly individualized care for their patients. We are so grateful for ENOA's ongoing support of our students and how they contribute to the excellent education that Creighton provides."

ENOA staff have been beyond impressed by what the students are learning in this program along with how they demonstrate the utmost professionalism.

The faculty includes a review at the end of the event by asking the students and volunteers what they learned.

This year, a student said he learned how beautiful cursive handwriting could be as he never had the opportunity to learn it. A volunteer learned new exercises to help balance along with learning how to

take a pulse. When asked for advice from the future health care professionals, the volunteers responded with, "exercise humor, listen to your patients, be thorough and one volunteer stated that her student didn't need any because they were awesome."

"They go above and beyond to provide a meaningful, helpful experience for each volunteer, yet each of the 80 students thank us by writing each volunteer a personal thank you note presented after each event," ENOA's Volunteer Services Division Director, Mary Parker said. "The faculty's careful planning and consideration of details have resulted in successful annual health fairs, balance clinics, vitals clinics, and student presentations to our volunteers. It is impressive that ENOA is just one of many recipients of projects managed by Creighton. The attention they give to each project is commendable and always exceeds our expectations. Their hard work and dedication provide a most worthwhile service to the community and our aging adults."

# Getting ready for the silver tsunami and healthcare costs

Yahoo Finance, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and many other sources have identified 2024 – 2027 as the years of the “Silver Tsunami” or “Peak 65.” During this period approximately 12,000 people per day will turn 65.

According to the Social Security Administration, a male turning 65 this year can expect to live another 17 years, a female three years longer.

Nearly 90% of people over 65 take at least one medication with more than half taking four or more prescription medications.

Fidelity Investments shared its 23rd annual Retiree Health Care Cost Estimate in August, 2024. This estimate revealed that a 65-year-old retiring this year can expect to spend an average of \$165,000 in healthcare and medical expenses throughout retirement.

This estimate is up 5% over 2023.

Healthcare costs are high and extremely unpredictable for each of us but the amount we spend can be a significant factor in our satisfaction with our retirement years.

Medicare is the primary vehicle providing healthcare for people over 65. No one wants to spend more than necessary for their healthcare but we all want to receive the best care possible.

What can I do to stretch my healthcare dollars to achieve both objectives?

## I AM THINKING ABOUT USING MEDICARE AS MY HEALTHCARE COVERAGE IN 2025 WHAT SHOULD I DO?

When should I start the information gathering process? Where can I go to get some of my questions answered?

If I have a unique situation, can Volunteers Assisting Seniors help me design a plan? I have heard about financial penalties for doing the wrong thing when it comes to Medicare—How do I avoid those?

I receive lots of mail about Medicare—what should I keep and what can I throw away? I get emails, texts, and calls



## VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING SENIORS

about Medicare. I am afraid of fraud but I do not want to miss out on something important—how should I handle all these communications?

I am still employed; do I have to enroll in Medicare? If I decide to start receiving my Social Security income before I turn 65, do I have to take Medicare?

To provide answers to these and many other questions, Volunteers Assisting Seniors recommends a two-step process.

First, attend a New to Medicare workshop. The workshop is free and provides an overview of the basics of Medicare. Second, after attending the workshop, make an appointment to see one of our counselors.

This hour-long session will provide an opportunity for you to discuss details which may be unique to you.

The objective is to partner with you and help you develop a plan of action complete with timeframes and directions on how to move forward and implement Medicare as your healthcare coverage.

While it is certainly true that Medicare is complex, our certified counselors work with you, and together, we use the complexity to your advantage. When we discuss your specific circumstances, the complexity allows us to formulate plans that best fit your individual needs.

Our experience has demonstrated that people who avail themselves of both steps make fewer Medicare related mistakes, have a better understanding of the decisions they make regarding their Medicare coverage, and have more peace of mind transitioning to Medicare coverage.

healthcare coverage should begin the information gathering process at least 90 days before their proposed Medicare start date. If you are not sure of your start date, that is OK.

People are there that can help you arrive at the start date decision that is the best for you.

### SAVE THE DATE

Volunteers Assisting Seniors hosts workshops in Douglas County. The workshops are interactive and questions are encouraged. Workshops can be attended at: New Cassel Retirement Center, 900

North 90th Street, Omaha, from 6:30-8 p.m.

The dates include January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16, May 21 and June 18.

For more information or an appointment to discuss Medicare please contact Volunteers Assisting Seniors. You can also follow Volunteers Assisting Seniors on Facebook at “VAS Nebraska.” Information about Medicare and Fraud are included. “Fraud Friday” is a Facebook feature providing the latest information about phone and email scams.



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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.

# Intercultural Senior Center's singing club connects through Spanish music



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

The Intercultural Senior Center, located at 5545 Center St., hosts their Spanish Speaking Club every Monday. The group will get together to sing traditional Spanish music once a week with a room full of people, "it's a lot of fun."



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



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

## Respite Across the Lifespan

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

Please contact Respite Across the Lifespan at [edbennett@unmc.edu](mailto:edbennett@unmc.edu) or 402-559-5732 to find out more about respite services and to locate resources in your area.

## Camelot Friendship Center

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

- **January 1:** Camelot is closed
  - **January 16:** "Jackpot Bingo" @ 12:15 p.m.
  - **January 17:** Book Club meets @ 12:30 p.m.
  - **January 20:** Camelot is closed
  - **January 22:** Mary Link to perform hosted by Merry-makers & Dreamweavers @ 11:45 a.m.
  - **January 29:** Team Trivia Challenge @ 12:30 p.m.
- Every Monday – Card Game: Manipulation @ 10 a.m.  
 Every Monday – Pickleball @ 10 a.m.  
 Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday – Kings in the Corner @ 12:30 p.m.  
 Every Wednesday – Hand & Foot @ 12:30 p.m.  
 Every Wednesday – Chair Volleyball @ 10 a.m.  
 Grab N Go meals are available.  
 For more information, contact Barb at 402-444-3091 or [barbara.white@cityofomaha.org](mailto:barbara.white@cityofomaha.org).



--Mason continued from page 1.

action using siblings and neighborhood kids as actors. She made films through high school.

"I taught myself editing and audio after reading about it and experimenting with it. That was a good learning experience."

She picked up pointers in a West-side TV production class and in a Junior Achievement class in which she and classmates produced a talk show at KMTV. The station later played a key role in her professional development. She was once intent on pursuing a career as a director. Aspiring filmmakers then had limited options.

"To go to film school you had a choice of New York or California and I couldn't see myself as an East Coaster."

She chose San Francisco State. Going from conservative Nebraska to that hub of social-political ferment induced culture shock.

"It was such a rich place – just hugely phenomenal and eye-opening."

Besides enjoying the city's sights and sounds her cinema studies opened her to whole segments of film she missed out on in Omaha.

"I played catchup with all the classics in my classes and at fabulous theaters like the Castro whose double feature bills changed every day. I was probably going to three double features a week. To me the classics are pure cinema. I love the writing and cinematography. Today I'm a constant Turner Classic Movies watcher."

## TRAVELER, CLIMBER, STORYTELLER

Between colleges she returned to Omaha at the invitation of former UPI foreign correspondent and KMTV newsman turned travel agent John Hlavacek. She was to produce his local travel TV program. But when she arrived he lacked funds to continue the show after acquiring a new agency, so he hired-trained her as a travel agent. With discounted air-rail tickets and time on her hands she followed her instincts to make a "life-changing" trip around the world in the fall of 1981.

She went from Ireland to England and all through Europe – Paris, Italy, Greece – onto Egypt, greater Africa, India, Nepal, Thailand, Hong Kong and Hawaii, returning home by way of San Francisco and Denver.

"When I got back I had 52 cents in my pocket. I started out traveling with people but then a lot of it I was by myself. I gained confidence that I could rely on myself to know what to do and where to go and there was always someone to help. There's good people everywhere."

After college she worked at KMTV as a news editor and photographer before her thirst for new places next brought her to Seattle. Working for CBS affiliate KIRO she felt drawn to Mt. Rainier.

"I was not a mountain climber at that time but seeing this gorgeous mountain from the city captivated



*COURTESY PHOTO*  
**RMI climber Mele Mason filming a rope team on the upper slopes of Mt. Rainier with a Sony Betacam prototype.**

by imagination. Making an ascent was something I really wanted to do and I wanted to film it."

She and KIRO reporter Karen O'Leary secured the assistance of expert mountaineers but the women first had to complete a training camp.

"It is a glacier climb and you have to know how to use ice axes and ropes and everything. Our instructors were Lou Whitaker, who along with his twin brother Jim is generally credited as the first American to reach the Everest peak, and Phursumba Sherpa, whose brother-in-law Nawang Gombu was the first man to climb Everest twice. Phursumba was also the nephew of Tenzing Norgay, the sherpa for the 1953 Everest expedition that saw Edmund Hillary and Norgay reach the top."

When O'Leary failed the training tests KIRO's news director nixed the story since no reporter was going along. But Mason wouldn't be denied.

"I was like, 'Hey, I've got a camera, I've got the guides, I'm going.' It's a two-day climb. The first day you go from 5,000 feet to camp Nero, which is about 10,000, and then you get up a little after midnight and climb up to the summit above 14,000 feet and then all the way down on the second day."

Getting to the peak meant testing her limits and overcoming challenges.

"I'm not a natural climber. In fact, I'm afraid of heights."

In a life full of adventures, she said, "The big trajectory really was the Rainier climb because that opened up a lot of incredible experiences. It more than prepped me. I've climbed Rainier three times now and it's still the hardest climb I've ever done, and I've done Kilimanjaro (Tanzania), the Karakoram (Pakistan) and the Himalayas (India)."

The 1984 Rainier ascent was also the first to combine her love of the outdoors and photography, which is why she regards it as her greatest triumph.

"That would be number one because not only did I do that myself the news director didn't want me to do it and I went ahead and did it anyway and edited it. He didn't show it on the regular evening news but a friend of mine who produced the noon news showed it on the program and that made it eligible for a regional Emmy, which it won."

The international climbs that followed, she said, "connect with the

Phursumba, Gombu sherpa experience where I'm with these amazing people who are among the greatest climbers ever, and yet so giving and open."

She won a Telly Award for her doc "Nawang Gombu: Heart of a Tiger" set in the Himalayas. It was the first time Phursumba had been back in 20 years. "I got his family, Gombu and his sister greeting him at the airport and him meeting up with all his friends in Darjeeling."

## AGAINST THE TIDE

Any career reflection means acknowledging the role KMTV played in helping her hone her craft. As a female photographer she was a unicorn but fortunate, she said, that "there were a lot of really strong women there in the news department," including Ninette Beaver, Kathy Niver, Rose Ann Shannon and Bev Chapman.

Mason credits two male photo-journalists then, Dave Hamer and Arlo Grafton, for support despite industry bias women couldn't hack carrying the heavy equipment. Any doubts they can hold their own, she said, should be put to rest by what women like herself do proving themselves in such male-dominated fields as photography, firefighting, law enforcement and military combat service.

"If you keep in shape and work hard you can do it."

Though she appreciates the men who mentored her she sensed resistance.

"I had wonderful men instruct me but one thing I could never do is complain about the weight of the gear or really anything. The guys could. It wasn't that they told me I couldn't complain, but I just knew if I said something it would be, oh, you know, she's a woman, she can't handle it. So you just sucked it up."

Even decades later women motion picture photographers and directors are scarce. "There aren't a lot of us. I still get clients tell me they've never worked with a woman photographer before. I went through a lot of stuff and still occasionally where people will look at me different or whatever. The funniest is when I'm on a shoot with a male audio location engineer and the producer will go into great detail with them but not me. The engineer will look at me sheepishly and I'll say, 'It's fine, I heard what I needed.' Once I start shooting the producer will realize, oh, she really does know what she's doing, and then they talk to me."

Close-minded perceptions don't stop her.

"It's always been easy for me because I knew what I wanted to do and I've always done what I wanted to do. I think the opportunities are there if you just have the persistence."

## TELLING STORIES

Meanwhile, her experience on Payne's Election dissuaded her from trying for a Hollywood directing career.

"I realized I don't like that kind of

shooting where you've got so many people on a crew. Your contribution adds in but it's just a very small portion to the whole. I really like smaller productions where I have a lot of control to tell stories and get my vision out there."

She's directed documentaries about trekking exploits. She also directed two social justice-themed docs with performer-writer-activist Daniel Beaty, the Rose Theatre and Vic Gutman & Associates. For I Dream of an Omaha Where she shot Beaty facilitating story circles with former gang members and families impacted by gun violence. Participants wrote a play they then performed at the Rose. Mason captured it all. Hearing the stories of pain and loss, she said, "was very eye-opening." She got close to Tabitha Manning who lost her daughter Payton Benson to gun violence.

"A ton of emotional stuff came out" of the story circles, said Mason, who tracked police calls via a scanner and went to the scenes of drive-bys to get footage of the aftermath.

We are Dreamers focuses on a group of DACA recipients passionate about America but worried about their status. "These young people are incredible and bright and add so much to our community and yet they're treated like pariahs. Now some of them are about to be rounded up and deported. It's so disheartening and appalling. I'm heartbroken about it."

For each project she went to subjects' homes and jobs to show glimpses of their lives. "I am still in contact with some of them."

Besides converging with her own progressive beliefs about immigration, criminal justice and economic disparity reform, she said the projects provided creative autonomy.

"The nice thing about those documentaries is that I was given tremendous leeway in how I wanted to put it together."

Mason covered the trials of the assailants in the 1993 rape and murder of transgendered Brandon Teena in Humboldt, Nebraska.

Reality as an independent filmmaker means being always ready when a phone call, text or email arrives with an assignment. It requires being ready to pick up and leave on a moment's notice to go on location.

The thrill of chasing a story or framing an issue is still appealing all these years later.

"You never know what you're going to get into."

You don't always know what the client wants. I try to be as prepared as I can be for every job. That's all I can do."

She's grateful for "all these incredible, fascinating experiences" that come her way, never fully knowing where the next project will take her.

"One of the coolest things about my life is that these opportunities just show up and luckily I've been able to take advantage. I try to just be open. I hope I can stay healthy enough to continue to do this because I truly love it."



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# A social wellness checklist

Positive social habits can help you build support systems and stay healthier mentally and physically.

Here are some tips for connecting with others:

## MAKE CONNECTIONS

Social connections might help protect health and lengthen life. Scientists are finding that our links to others can have powerful effects on our health. Whether with family, friends, neighbors, romantic partners, or others, social connections can influence our biology and well-being. Look for ways to get involved with others.

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHILE CARING FOR OTHERS

Many of us will end up becoming a caregiver at some point in our lives. The stress and strain of caregiving can take a toll on your health. It's important to find ways to care for your health while caring for others. Depending on your circumstances, some self-care strategies may be more difficult to carry out than others.

## GET ACTIVE TOGETHER

Where you live, work, or go to school can have a big impact on how much you move and even how much you weigh.

Being active with others in your community can have a positive effect on your health habits and create opportunities to connect. You can help your community create ways to encourage more physical activity.

## SHAPE YOUR FAMILY'S HABITS

Many things can influence a child, including friends, teachers, and the things they see when they sit in front of the TV or computer. If you're a parent, know that your everyday behavior plays a big part in shaping your child's behavior, too. With your help, kids can learn to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits that last throughout their lives.

## BOND WITH YOUR KIDS

Parents have an important job. Raising kids is both rewarding and challenging. Being sensitive, responsive, consistent, and available to your kids can help you build positive, healthy relationships with them. The strong emotional bonds that result help children learn how to manage their own feelings and behaviors and develop self-confidence.

## BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Strong, healthy relationships are important throughout your life. They can impact your mental and physical wellbeing. As a child you learn the social skills you need to form and maintain relationships with others. But at any age you can learn ways to improve your relationships. It's important to know what a healthy relationship looks like and how to keep your connections supportive.

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

# Behaviors flow from our mindset

I abandoned New Year's resolutions years ago. Why make them when I know I will not follow through on my wishful thinking goals? Our behaviors flow from our mindset. My behaviors will not change unless I do the harder work of examining my attitudes, assumptions, and dispositions. Here are three examples.

If my attitude is that, now that I am older, staying fit is no longer possible I will think, "Why try? I may as well eat what I want and quit worrying about weight. Dieting and exercise will not make me any younger." Truthfully, I found myself falling into this trap during the past year. My stamina and my energy suffered. As I was able to reevaluate and shift my thinking to believing that I am capable of improving my diet and of increasing my exercise, my stamina and energy improved. It does feel good to take some control over my physical well-being. I am empowered when I feel better about myself, knowing I am not giving up.

Another area of life that can trap us is a diet of intellectual junk food or time wasted on endless hours of dumb TV. I noticed that watching repetitious news

## Conscious Aging

By Nancy Hemesath

coverage was helping neither my knowledge nor my mood. Cutting news watching back to one hour per day opens up a lot of time for more productive activities. Improving one's mind is stimulating, creating its own kind of enjoyment. Replacing intellectual laziness with thought-provoking reading or other forms of mind stimulation makes us more interested and more interesting people.

Another area in which a shift in attitude can improve our lives is that of relationships. It is easy to pigeon hole people with whom we interact. Maybe a neighbor talks too much so we simply avoid such persons, never getting to really know them. Others may be too loud, too negative or too something else for our taste. Instead of writing them off, a significant thought shift would be to become more curious about them. Each person is an accumulated wealth of stories. By inviting another to share some of their stories our eyes are opened. We may discover that under-

neath this person is someone with great value rather than just someone with an annoying habit. When we discover these hidden treasures, our own lives are enriched.

We have looked at a variety of ways that by shifting our thinking, we can improve our lives going forward. By selfcare of our bodies, we empower ourselves to be more active. By stimulating our minds, life becomes more interesting and we have more to offer others. By reframing our perceptions of others, we are enriched by what they have to offer. A commitment to any one of these practices suggests that we are still ready to grow as persons. This provides a path to a full, enjoyable life that will yield benefits in this new year.

*(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.)*



## We want to hear from you.

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

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

**enoa.info@enoa.org**

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



## OMAHA SENIOR LIVING SERIES

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# Using an annuity when it comes to retirement planning



**Mary**  
the  
**Medicare Lady**  
*A non-government entity*

An annuity is a contract with an insurance company designed to provide a consistent stream of income, or to protect against principal loss, and can be a valuable tool in retirement planning.

The insurance company manages both the investment and mortality risk, providing predictable, guaranteed income for life or a specified period of time — typically to people in or nearing retirement.

Longevity, inflation and market volatility are three major risks people may encounter during retirement. Annuities are insurance products that offer many unique and valuable benefits to help people navigate these risks and bring them financial security.

Longevity Risk means outliving your income or needing long-term care. Inflation Risk results in loss of purchasing power.

Market Risk refers to the volatility of the stock market and sequence of returns.

## HERE ARE SOME TYPES OF ANNUITIES

**Income Annuities:** In exchange for a lump sum of money, income annuity owners receive a regular, recurring paycheck from the insurance company. Income annuities funded with a single premium (SPIAs) are often combined with other guaranteed income sources such as Social Security or a pension to provide an income floor to cover a retiree's basic needs.

**Fixed Annuities** are designed for safety, and are a good fit for retirees seeking tax-deferral, and a guaranteed, fixed rate of interest — regardless of market volatility. A low-risk CD alternative, annuity owners earn a stated rate of interest from the insurance company offering predictable outcomes. Fixed annuities help people save and grow their money on a tax-deferred basis allowing for more efficient growth and greater control over their tax situation. Fixed annuities can also be used to provide guaranteed income.

**Multi-year guaranteed annuities (MYGAs)** guarantee a fixed interest rate for a specified time period — usually 1 to 10 years — and are subject to surrender

financial security and peace of mind.

**Tax-Deferred Growth:** Funds in a deferred annuity grow tax-deferred, meaning the interest earned is typically not taxed until withdrawals are made.

This benefit can be advantageous for retirees seeking to maximize the growth of their investments over time. This leaves more money in the annuity to grow and compound, which over time can be a tremendous benefit for the annuity owner.

**Supplementing Other Income:** Annuities can complement other retirement income sources, such as Social Security, pensions, and withdrawals from retirement accounts.

This diversification strengthens overall financial security in retirement.

**Simplified Financial Management:** Annuities offer a consistent income or fixed return, which can make managing finances easier in retirement by reducing the need for complex budgeting or investment decisions.

While annuities can offer several benefits, there are also some potential drawbacks to consider.

Some annuities come with high fees, including administrative charges, surrender charges (for early withdrawals), and management fees for variable annuities.

These costs can erode the returns on your investment over time. Annuities can be difficult to understand and may have complicated terms and conditions, making it challenging for investors to fully grasp what they are purchasing.

*Mary Hiatt is President of Mary the Medicare Lady (A non-government entity.) She is a member of a pharmacist-led organization that helps her clients source savings for medications. She offers Educational Workshops on Medicare, Drug Savings, How to Stop Phone Calls, and more at no charge. Not connected with or endorsed by the U.S. government or the federal Medicare program. See [www.hiattagency.com](http://www.hiattagency.com) or contact licensed independent agent [mary@hiattagency.com](mailto:mary@hiattagency.com) or call or text 402-672-9449 for more information.*

charges.

However, many carriers offer penalty-free withdrawal provisions.

**Fixed Indexed Annuities** are unique risk management vehicles that combine the growth potential of index-linked interest, the protection from market downturns and the guarantees of lifetime income. Fixed Index Annuities FIAs are between fixed and variable annuities in terms of risk and return.

They offer greater growth potential than traditional fixed annuities with less volatility than variable annuities. FIAs have a guaranteed floor protecting the policy owner against a loss if the index decreases in value.

Once the interest is earned and credited, the value of the contract cannot decline, even if the index returns were negative.

## HERE'S HOW ANNUITIES CAN HELP SECURE YOUR RETIREMENT

**Asset Preservation:** Depending on the type of annuity, it can offer a guaranteed rate of return or protection from market fluctuations.

For instance, fixed annuities provide a predictable return, which can lower investment risks compared to more volatile options.

This stability can be particularly appealing to retirees who seek to protect their capital after they no longer receive a salary.

**Reliable Income Stream:** An annuity can offer a dependable and consistent income, ensuring retirees have enough funds to cover essential living expenses.

**Protection Against Longevity Risk:** Converting part of your retirement savings into an annuity can help guard against the risk of running out of money in later years.

Lifetime annuities guarantee income for as long as the retiree lives, providing

# King Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Haunting
  - 6 Seizes
  - 11 Cancels
  - 12 More apt to seep
  - 14 April 1 gags
  - 15 Consult
  - 16 Scrooge portrayer Alastair
  - 17 Feudal workers
  - 19 Oahu, for one (Abbr.)
  - 20 Nobel Prize subj.
  - 22 San Francisco's — Hill
  - 23 Sufficient, informally
  - 24 Philosopher Kierkegaard
  - 26 Droning reed
  - 28 Tease
  - 30 USO patrons
  - 31 Flood protection
  - 35 "Cabaret" director Bob
  - 39 Tactic
  - 40 Pantheon member
  - 42 Future doc's exam
  - 43 Gore and Green
  - 44 Bamboozles
  - 46 Med. plan option
  - 47 "— shabby!"
  - 49 Take it slow
  - 51 Saunter
  - 52 Andean pack animals
  - 53 Rescued
  - 54 Austin native
  - 8 Dye type
  - 9 Two-piece suit
  - 10 Establishes
  - 11 Basilica areas
  - 13 Husband of Pocahontas
  - 18 Filch
  - 21 Hardly hip
  - 23 — salts
  - 25 Pen tip
  - 27 Computer image, briefly
  - 29 Novelist Enid
  - 31 Bridges
  - 32 Doles out
  - 33 Cosa —
  - 34 Sticky stuff
  - 36 Blueprint, e.g.
  - 37 Pacific islander
  - 38 Short jackets
  - 41 Resided
  - 44 Only
  - 45 Auction
  - 48 "Mazel —!"
  - 50 Jazz band instrument

## DOWN

- 1 Physicist Fermi
- 2 Captivate
- 3 Skedaddle
- 4 Sorts
- 5 Ruhr Valley city
- 6 Course load?
- 7 Aussie hoppers

	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				
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39					40		41		42			
43				44				45		46		
47			48				49		50			
51							52					
		53					54					

## This Month's Crossword Puzzle

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

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

# Protect yourself against hackers with strong, resistant passwords

By Kelly C. Bourne

Many experts have predicted its demise, but passwords remain the most common method of authentication for accounts, applications and websites. Virtually everyone that uses a computer has had to use or create a password.

Because they're so widely used, cybercriminals try to determine the passwords of potential victims. If they're able to log into your account(s) using an uncovered password these criminals can hurt you in many ways, including:

- Steal funds from online sources like bank accounts or retirement accounts.
- Learn personal information about you that can lead to identity theft.
- Open new loans or credit card accounts under your name.
- Obtain health care treatment using your identity.
- Damage your reputation by sending out spam from your email account.
- Make online purchases using your credit card accounts.

There are several methods of discovering or 'crack-

ing' passwords. Some of the most common are:

- Phishing is sending emails to a potential victim under false pretenses. The bogus email tries to convince the recipient to open an attachment or click on a link in the email. If the victim falls for the deception, then malware (malicious software) will be installed on his or her computer. This malware can steal personal information including passwords.

- Social engineering is when a bad guy tricks potential victims into revealing personal information including passwords. Social engineering attacks can be via email, text messages, phone calls or in person.

- A keylogger is a piece of software installed on a victim's computer that records every keystroke made on the device. All the victim's keyboard activity, including account IDs and passwords, get sent to the criminal.

Keyloggers can be installed by phishing emails, social engineering or by visiting an infected website.

- Brute force attacks are when a hacker enters every possible password into an account looking for the correct one. Tools called password crackers are used during these attacks. The shorter and simpler a password is, the more likely it is that a brute force attack will uncover it.

- Credential stuffing attacks occur when lists of legitimate credentials, i.e. account IDs and passwords, exposed by previous data breaches are used to gain access to other accounts. If your credentials were revealed by a data breach

and the same passwords was used for multiple accounts, your other accounts may be compromised.

The average user has a surprisingly large number of passwords. NordPass, a computer security firm, reports that users typically have 168 passwords for personal use and 87 for business-related ones. Dashlane, a password manager vendor, estimates the average user has 240 accounts needing passwords.

The human brain isn't capable of remembering 200+ different passwords. Studies show that the average person can reliably remember between four and seven passwords. How do users get around this difference?

One common way users deal with numerous passwords is by reusing the same password for multiple accounts. Reusing passwords is extremely risky. The danger is that if a hacker uncovers or "cracks" it then he can access all of the users' accounts using that password.

Using simple passwords, e.g. 'abcdef', 'password' or '123456' is another risk. Hackers have lists of simple passwords that they tried when cracking into accounts. Every year lists of the most frequently used passwords are published. An Internet search of "most often used passwords" will display them. If any of your passwords are on these lists, change them immediately.

Never changing passwords is a choice some users make. The risk is that if a password is never changed hackers have unlimited time to guess it. Once they've cracked or discovered it,

they can access that account indefinitely.

Choosing a new password that is a simple variation of the current passwords is a bad idea. For example, if the existing password is "secret" don't replace it with 'secret1.' Software cracking tools try variations like this.

Writing down all of your passwords in a computer file or on a piece of paper is a common practice. It's true that this can help record numerous passwords, but it involves some risk. If someone else sees that file or piece of paper, then all of the accounts are at risk.

Some steps that can be taken to protect your accounts are:

Choose strong passwords, i.e. ones that have the following characteristics:

- Passwords should be a minimum of 12 to 14 characters long. Short passwords can be easily guessed or discovered by cracking tools.

- Passwords should include upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters like #, @ or &. This combination makes it almost impossible to guess a password. It also makes cracking it significantly more difficult.

- Passwords shouldn't be based on your name, birthdate, address, favorite sports teams, pet names, etc. Hackers can find an amazing amount of personal information like this on the Internet, particularly on social media sites.

- Passwords shouldn't be words found in dictionaries. Password cracking tools often use all dictionary words when trying to break into accounts.

- Passwords written on a

Post-It® note and attached to the monitor or under the keyboard aren't secure.

- Every account should have a unique password. Reusing passwords for multiple accounts is extremely dangerous.

- Passwords should be updated regularly. Experts recommend changing passwords every 60 to 90 days.

Using a passphrase instead of a password is one way to keep an account secure. A passphrase is a string of words that is easily remembered but would be hard to guess or crack. Some examples of passphrases are:

- TheSoundOfMusicIsMyFavoriteMovie
- InColdBloodByCapote
- DoYouKnowTheWayToSanJose

Passphrases can be made more complex by substituting numbers for letters, capitalization or adding underscore characters. These passphrases are variations of the previous examples.

- TheS0undOfMusic1sMyFav0riteM0vie
- INC0ldBl00d\_ByCapot3

Using a password manager is another way to safeguard your accounts. A password manager is like a vault that stores all your passwords. You just need to remember the password to the password manager, and it can unlock all your accounts. I'll describe how password managers work in a future article.

*Kelly's newest book, Ransomware, Viruses, Social Engineering and Other Threats: Protecting Your Digital Assets will be available from Mercury Learning and Information in April, 2025.*



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Report Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly or Vulnerable Adults

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

Nebraska Adult Protective Services



\*Calls can be made anonymously

## Programs changing this month at AARP NE Information Center

By Tony Harris  
AARP NE Information Center

Did you know in 2024 the Nebraska Legislature passed a new Caregiver Tax Credit that will provide a nonrefundable tax credit for out-of-pocket incurred by certain unpaid family caregivers?

AARP Nebraska fought



for this new tax credit as a way to help Nebraska's 179,000 family caregivers and the parents, spouses, and other loved ones they care for every day.

On January 15, at 1:30 p.m., anyone is invited to attend the AARP Nebraska In-

formation Center's monthly program to hear Jina Ragland, AARP Nebraska's Associate State Director for Advocacy, talk about this new tax credit and help explain if you or a loved one may qualify for this new tax benefit.

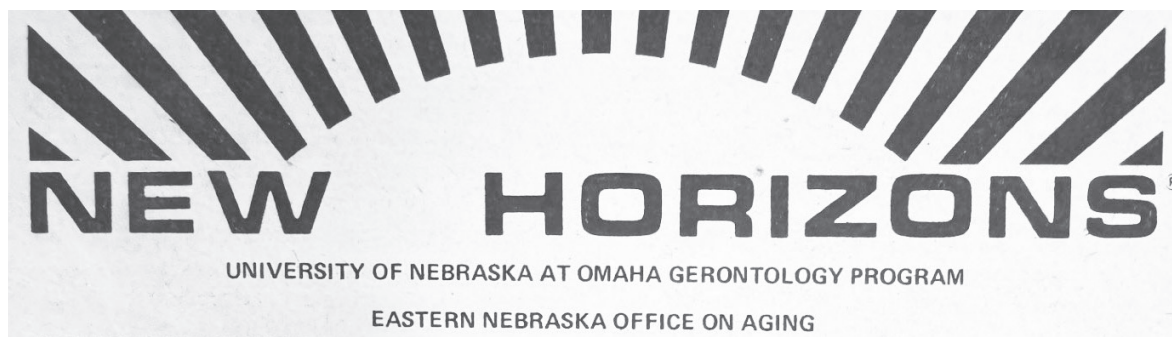
The Information Center is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10

a.m. until 4 p.m.

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

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

# Taking a look back at old New Horizons newspapers: January



## ENOA to move into a third county

In response to citizen requests and with the support of the county's board of commissioners, the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) is currently outlining plans that will bring its services for the aging to Washington County.

Lawrie Robertson, ENOA director, said the services will begin with the establishment of a nutrition site in the county. The location of the site, expected to open in February or March, has not been specified yet.

Robertson said the plans to expand ENOA services beyond its present two-county (Douglas and Sarpy) jurisdiction originated with the senior citizens of Blair. Doug Carter, a spokesman for the Blair seniors, has previously met with the state director of the Nebraska Commission on Aging and has also spoken before the ENOA Advisory Council to

Calhoun (Kenneth Robinson), Arlington (Dr. Jack Cady), Herman (John F. Eriksen) and Kennard (Lewis F. Ward) be appointed to this task force, along with Ted Jarosz of the Blair Housing Authority.

Robertson said ENOA has sought and received permission from the Nebraska Commission on Aging to expand services into the area which encompasses Washington County. He said ENOA is also requesting additional funding to develop the nutrition site. He added that ENOA hopes to employ Washington County citizens to fill positions funded by the nutrition program.



COURTESY PHOTO

In January of 1977 issue of the New Horizons, an article was published about the growth of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA).

## Omaha Weavers and Spinners Guild celebrates 75 years of existence

A well-kept secret is a group of Omaha Weavers and Spinners who quietly weave cloth on looms or spin yarn on a spinning wheel. They meet monthly at Underwood Presbyterian Church in Omaha to share information and their skills. Through several special events in 2024 and 2025, this group of fiber artists are going to get noisy as they celebrate their 75th Anniversary.

On March 17, 1950, the Omaha Weavers Guild was founded by William and Cornelia Nelson with 10 charter members. The first Guild project was a gift of saleable handwoven items to Children's Hospital. The second project was to begin the Guild Library.

The Guild first displayed table linens designed and woven by members for a contemporary china exhibit.

Within six months, the membership more than doubled to 23, and plans were underway for the first Guild show held at Joslyn Art Museum.

On May 15, 1973, the craft of spinning was officially recognized by the Guild and the name was changed to the Omaha Weavers and Spinners Guild. Through the years the Guild has given demonstrations at schools, museums, and art fairs to promote their art and craft. Art shows have been held at Joslyn Art Museum, Gallery 72, Craftsman Guild Gallery, Dale Clark Library, the Hilmer Gallery, Franklin Street Gallery, Culinary Services, Hot Shops and Lauritzen Gardens. There's currently an annual sale on the Saturday before Thanksgiving at the Westside Community Center.

In 1975 when Cornelia moved to Omaha after college graduation, she stopped at the Craftsman's Gallery in the Old Market and asked the owner if she could connect her with a weaving teacher.

Months later Cornelia called her and offered to teach her to weave by giving lessons from her home until she was able to buy her own table loom. Since Cornelia expected her students to become OWSG members, she did. Layna has been weaving since and states that OWSG has been a driving force in her weaving life providing workshops, education and a lifetime of great friends. Today OWSG has grown to 51 members.

In June 2008, the Guild hosted Midwest Weavers Conference, "Roots" at Dana College in Blair, providing classes, vendors and numerous exhibits and tours to approximately 200 participants from across the country.

The Guild library today houses over 230 books and DVD's on weaving, spinning and related fiber arts. The Guild also owns seven looms, one spinning wheel and drum carder that are available for members.

On Saturday, March 22, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., they will present a history of early beginnings with the museum and participants can take part in a spinning and weaving demonstration by Guild members.

For more information about the upcoming events, check out the schedule of all classes and events on their website, owsguild.com or their Facebook page.

## UNO Research Studies

The CAPACITY Lab in the Department of Gerontology at UNO is looking for healthy adults and caregivers to an older adult with a chronic disease (e.g., dementia, cancer, cardiovascular disease), to participate in a research study about the impact of aging on the neural and behavioral bases of social processing.

The study will include an online, at home component (7 hours over 4 days), and one in person visit (2 hours, 30 minutes), which will take place at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). There will be an experiment that involves an online questionnaires and interview, computer tasks, saliva collection (for hormone analyses), blood draw, and brain imaging. Compensation for study participation is available. Parking is complementary and located a short walk from the building where the experiment will take place.

Do you qualify? They are looking for adults between the ages of 19-90 years, you must have comprehension of written and spoken English, have mobility to travel to UNMC to participate and you must have completed a minimum of two years of high school or higher.

The second study is about recruiting family caregivers for older adults with dementia.

The study will include two in-person visits of approximately three hours each that will take place at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The study involves completing questionnaires, interviews, and tasks, a blood draw, and brain imaging. Parking is complementary and located a short walk from the building where the experiment will take place. Compensation for study participation is available.

To qualify, you must be an adult between 45-75 years of age, female, right-handed, and currently an unpaid family caregiver to an individual with Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia, or Lewy body dementia for at least 10 hours a week and for at least 6 consecutive months.

You must have comprehension of written and spoken English, have normal or corrected to normal hearing and vision, have mobility to travel to UNO and UNMC and must have completed a minimum of two years of high school or higher.

If you are interested please call 402-554-2951 or email Janelle Beadle, Ph.D. at UNOCapacity@unomaha.edu.



# FREE SMOKE ALARMS



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

Or visit  
[redcross.org/smokealarmNE](https://redcross.org/smokealarmNE)  
[redcross.org/smokealarmIA](https://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.

### FIRE FACTS

**2 MINUTES**  
to get out  
of your house

**7 TIMES A DAY**  
someone dies  
from a house fire

**EVERY 40 MINUTES**  
a fire injury  
is reported

**PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES.**

**INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS.**

**MAKE A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN.**

## Fremont Friendship Center

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

A meal is served weekdays @ 11:30 a.m. Reservations, which are due by noon the business day prior to the meal the participant wishes to enjoy, can be made by calling 402-727-2815. A \$5 contribution is suggested for the meal.

This month's activities will include:

- **January 2:** Nye Presentation @ 10 a.m.
- **January 8:** Music with Johnny Johnson @ 10:30 a.m.
- **January 9:** Mobile Library at the Center @ 9:30 a.m.
- **January 9:** Sing-A-Long @ 10 a.m.
- **January 15:** Music with Jerry Stingley @ 10:30 a.m.
- **January 16:** Nutrition Minute @ 10 a.m.
- **January 20:** Center Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr.

Day

- **January 22:** Music with Billy Troy @ 10 a.m.
- **January 29:** Merry Maker's Presents John Worsham @ 10:30 a.m.

Craft class on Tuesday afternoons @ 1:30 p.m.

Tai Chi offered every Tuesday and Friday from 9:15-10 a.m.

If you can't stay for lunch with our friends and you currently participate in any activity at the center, you may now order a Grab-n-Go meal to take home for your lunch. Grab-n-Go meals must be reserved the day before by noon and the person ordering the lunch must come in to the center to pick it up at 11 a.m. The number of Grab-n-Go lunches are limited to a first come first serve basis. Suggested donation is \$5.

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

## Intercultural Senior Center

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

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

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

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

If people need assistance with their benefits, the ISC can help them out.

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

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

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

## Florence Senior Center

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

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

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

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

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

## 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.

# Bellevue Senior Center hosts an 'Out of the Box' exhibition



NEW HORIZONS PHOTO

The Bellevue Senior Center located at 109 W 22nd Ave, in Bellevue, brought artists together for the, "Out of the Box" exhibition. Over the course of a 10-week workshop, artists collaborated with Nebraska's Art Council's Kim Darling, and embraced a variety of artistic mediums, from painting and sculpture to mixed media and collage, to explore and share their journeys. The exhibition marked the culmination of their efforts, highlighting the transformative process of artmaking as a tool for self-discovery and connection. Each piece represented a voice that contributes to the rich tapestry of life experiences.

The program provided a space where participants could reflect, communicate and find empowerment through their artwork, ultimately discovering the strength of their own stories.

The Creative Aging Arts Program provides grants to hire an artist to lead workshops at senior centers, assisted living facilities, libraries and nonprofit organizations serving older adults. Applicants select from a list of teaching artists trained in best practices of engaging older adults.

During a residency, artists will share their expertise through sequential arts lessons, helping participants hone their skills in a variety of disciplines. Programs will also foster intentional social engagement among participants, culminating with a special event to showcase their work with peers and the community.

## Boosting oxytocin naturally: A vital key to senior well-being

By Paula Crozier

In the golden years, staying healthy involves more than regular checkups and proper nutrition — it includes nurturing emotional well-being. Oxytocin, the "love hormone," plays a crucial role in emotional connection, stress reduction, and overall happiness. For seniors, boosting oxytocin naturally can profoundly enhance their quality of life.

Simple, everyday activities like petting a dog or cat can trigger a flood of oxytocin, fostering a sense of companionship. For those who may not have access to live pets, robotic pets provide similar benefits, offering comfort and alleviating loneliness.

Engaging in hobbies such as gardening, painting, or playing music can

spark joy and strengthen neural connections. Social interactions, whether through volunteering, group activities, or community events, offer another potent way to increase oxytocin while creating lasting memories.

Physical touch also matters—hugs from loved ones or even hand-holding have been shown to elevate oxytocin levels significantly. Meanwhile, regular exercise, like walking or yoga, not only benefits the body but also releases this hormone, improving emotional balance.

Research consistently highlights the link between oxytocin and reduced stress, lower blood pressure, and improved mental health. By embracing these activities, seniors can cultivate

stronger connections, maintain vitality, and enhance their emotional resilience.

Prioritizing oxytocin-boosting activities is more than a prescription for happiness — it's a pathway to thriving in the later stages of life. Whether through a warm embrace, a furry friend, or the joy of helping others, seniors have countless opportunities to enrich their well-being.

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

## Flaherty Senior Consulting

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

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

Upcoming meeting dates and locations are:

• **Jan. 14, March 11, May 13, July 8, Sept. 9, Nov. 11**  
St. Vincent de Paul Church  
14330 Eagle Run Dr.

• **Jan. 25, March 22, May 17, July 26, Sept. 27, Nov. 29**  
Faith Westwood  
United Methodist Church  
4814 Oaks Ln.

• **Feb. 6, April 3, June 5, Aug. 7, Oct. 2, Dec. 4**  
The Servite Center of Compassion  
72nd St. and Ames Cr.

• **Feb. 19, April 16, June 18, Aug. 20, Oct. 15, Dec. 17**  
St. Timothy Lutheran Church  
93rd and Dodge streets

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

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

## Ralston Senior Center

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

- **January 8:** Board meeting @ 9:30 a.m.
- **January 9 & 23:** Bingo @ 1 p.m.
- **January 15, 22 & 29:** Bingo @ 12:15 p.m.

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

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

## 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, home-stead 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.

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

This Month's  
Sudoku Answers

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

This Month's  
Crossword Answers

# Notre Dame Housing residents perform 'A Christmas Carol'



COURTESY PHOTOS

The Notre Dame Housing residents located at 3439 State St. presented, "A Christmas Carol," on December 7th and 8th. Patty Driscoll who is affiliated with the Nebraska Art Council, directed the play.



## CLASSIFIEDS

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Bellewood@KimballMgmt.com

**Monarch Villas**  
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Papillion (402) 331-6882  
Monarch@KimballMgmt.com



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# Scrapbooking: Memory keeping on paper

By Ron Petersen

The hobby of scrapbooking can be popular among older adults.

People use scrapbooks to tell a story, chronicle the history of their family, and preserve cherished memories. Most scrapbookers are also having fun and relieving stress.

“Scrapbooking is another way of having memories put on paper,” The Scrapbook Haven owner, Brandy Lewis said.

A scrapbook is a book of blank pages for sticking clippings, drawings, or pictures in, as defined by Dictionary.com. It can also be defined as, “a method of preserving, presenting, and arranging personal and family history in the form of a book, box, or card. Typical memorabilia include photographs, printed media, and artwork. Albums are often decorated and frequently contain extensive journal entries or written descriptions.”

A scrapbook album is a collection of pages, typically bound like a book or a photo album, containing photos, journaling, ephemera, clippings, letters, tiny trinkets, and other souvenirs. It is often decorated with stickers, die-cuts, stamped images, colorful



COURTESY PHOTO

Scrapbooking is a fun and creative crafting activity to document precious memories, keep souvenirs and mementos and channel your inner artist.

washi tapes, journaling, doodles, etc. Its main goal is to tell a story with each page. Here are a few other reasons why people try out the hobby:

- To preserve precious memories for the next generation.
- To celebrate a special occasion.
- To commemorate an event.
- To simply remember a beautiful day or a funny and memorable thing that hap-

pened on that day.

- To take their journaling to the next level.
- To practice and hone their crafting skills and techniques such as stamping, alcohol marker coloring, water coloring, mixed media art and more.
- It's a fun way to express creativity without exerting too much effort.
- It's a simple but great way to pass the time.

Before you get started on your project, it is crucial to

learn about the materials, tools, and supplies you'll be needing to make one. To start a scrapbook page, you will need a glue gun, cutting tools, pens, photos, stamps, stickers and most importantly, paper.

“There's different kinds of paper and the popular kinds depends on the season. People will come in and put scrapbooks together for birthdays, holidays and even graduations,” Lewis said. “If we can find it, we can order it in. We get a new shipment of paper in every week, so we continually have a new product.”

As scrapbooking art evolved from simply collecting “scrap worthy” scraps to remembering special occasions and people through photo scrapbooks, different types of scrapbooks were created. The most common types of scrapbooks include family scrapbooks, nature scrapbooks, friendship scrapbooks and goal making scrapbooks.

“We have a groups of ladies that will come into our store every week to make different kinds of scrapbooks,” Lewis said.

Lewis and her co-owner, Gena Christofferson run their scrapbook store, The Scrapbook Haven, located at 8430 Park Dr. in Omaha. The Scrapbook Haven offers a brand new and expanded inventory of scrapbooking and paper art supplies to the area since 2022.

“We're literally the only place in the Omaha metro area that specializes in scrapbooking,” Lewis said.

“We get a lot of travelers, and we listen to what people want.”

Not only do they sell supplies, but they offer events to anyone who would like to get involved with scrapbooking.

“We have a 3-day event every month that we sell out. On Wednesdays in particular, we usually have 18-24 people that will come in,” Lewis said. “Our demographic is primarily women, but we mostly see women who are middle to older individuals. We are hosting kid's days on Sundays where parents can bring their kids in to play, which will hopefully get kids interested in paper and scrapbooks. We have a couple of ladies that bring their granddaughters, and some of them have taken off with it.”

Creating a do it yourself scrapbook to document life's most precious moments is a beautiful way to have some alone time and de-stress, explore and embark on a creative journey, or simply bond with family and friends. The most important things to remember before you start creating your customized pages is to find the best supplies, invest in high-quality custom kits, search for inspiration, and of course, enjoy the journey.

“People want to see the paper, smell it and feel it,” Lewis said. “We have people come in everyday and say that they didn't know that we existed. We want people to know that scrapbooking is here in town and never left.”



## Join the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program

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

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

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

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



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