In 2020, Terri Sanders became publisher of The Omaha Star, Nebraska’s only Black-owned newspaper. Terri is also the mother of Symone Sanders, the national spokeswoman for United States Vice-President Kamala Harris.

Leo Adam Biga’s profile of Terri Sanders begins on page 8.

The Tower of the Four Winds opened in Blair, Neb. in 1987 to honor Nebraska author John G. Neihardt and Black Elk, an Oglala Lakota medicine man.

See page 16.
The ISC is offering online learning videos which can be accessed from the safety and comfort of your home at interculturalseniorcenter.org and on Facebook at ISC Class Connect.

A monthly food pantry is available at the ISC for persons age 50+ and older.

The ISC is looking for home delivered meals volunteers on Wednesdays and Fridays @ 10:30 a.m. More information is available at interculturalseniorcenter.org.

The ISC is a site for ENOA's Grab-n-Go meals Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Reserve your meal before 10 a.m. the day prior. Recipients must be age 60 or older. A contribution is suggested.

The ISC's SAVE bus can bring case management services to your doorstep. For more information, please call 402-444-6529.

Moments like these are precious. Don't let them fade away.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness in people age 55+. Early detection is the key to saving your sight.

Protect your vision from fading away. Call the Foundation Fighting Blindness for a free information packet about preventing and managing AMD.

A cure is in sight 800-610-4558 • FightBlindness.org

The long-term impact of the coronavirus

By Dr. Henry W. Mahncke

It appears increasingly likely that COVID-19 will have a long-lasting impact on the brain health and cognitive abilities of many people who have otherwise recovered from the disease’s acute symptoms. Surprisingly, the effects are significant even in younger patients where the cognitive deficits can be similar to symptoms associated with age-related cognitive decline.

A recent study from researchers at the Imperial College London, Cambridge University, King’s College London, and the University of Chicago indicated there may be chronic cognitive consequences from COVID-19 which scale with the severity of symptoms from the disease, and which are evident even in those who were never hospitalized.

The researchers reported a reduction in overall cognitive ability for those who were hospitalized and on ventilators to roughly equivalent to the average loss in cognitive abilities over a 10-year period as people age.

Previous studies of people hospitalized with other respiratory diseases indicate cognitive deficits persisting for at least five years after hospitalization, so the researchers note these results aren’t surprising.

What struck the researchers as unexpected is there was also a deficit, though not as large, among people not put on a ventilator and among people never hospitalized. Among people hospitalized but not put on a ventilator, the deficits reported by the researchers were 20% smaller. Among those who remained home the deficits were 80% smaller.

As a neuroscientist not involved with this study, I found these results of great interest. Normally, infectious diseases shouldn’t have significant effects on the brain, because the brain has a defensive system – the blood-brain barrier – composed of specialized cells that form a wall that should keep infectious agents like virus and bacteria out of the brain.

While any illness that can cause a fever may lead to short-term cognitive issues, typically those problems are transient and go away when the fever resolves itself.

As the COVID-19 crisis emerged in 2020, neuroscientists kept a careful eye on reports there might be more significant brain health issues associated with the coronavirus. At first, many assumed the reports of attention, memory problems, and foginess were like what would be reported with the ordinary flu. It soon became clear these symptoms were distinct and worse with the coronavirus.

When reports began emerging that people with COVID-19 were losing their sense of taste and smell, neuroscientists knew that this was a big concern because it suggested the virus was somehow affecting neurological function directly despite the protective blood-brain barrier.

Recent data suggests a COVID-19 infection weakens the blood-brain barrier perhaps as a side-effect of the immune system’s efforts to fight the infection and perhaps by direct action of the virus itself. In either case, it’s clear individuals with severe COVID-19 can develop a number of neurological complications including blood cloting, stroke, encephalopathies, micro-bleeds, and inflammatory syndrome.

That’s in addition to the well-known risks to cognitive function arising from spending time in an intensive care unit.

This paints a worrisome picture for neuroscientists studying COVID and certainly for people who have suffered a COVID-19 infection and their loved ones. This study provides more evidence for an increasingly common viewpoint that COVID “long-haulers” can have neurological and cognitive symptoms that persist long after their infection.

In this way, the coronavirus may be like certain other conditions such as cancer, HIV infection, or concussion where some patients are afflicted by cognitive symptoms that are long-lasting and aren’t addressed by the health care system.

Even people who are uninfected and following health guidelines (staying at home, maintaining social distance) face cognitive issues. Our brains are healthiest when they are stimulated, whether by interacting with others, maintaining social distance) or face cognitive issues.

New vaccines and treatments at the early stages of distribution, the next question is what, if anything, we can do to address these cognitive issues.

Studies of similar cognitive deficits – albeit from different causes – have shown these types of deficits can be reversed across a wide variety of patient populations including older adults, persons with mild cognitive impairment, chemotherapy, mild traumatic brain injury, and heart failure. COVID is an area in which the same sorts of tools should now be put to the test.

(Dr. Mahncke is a neuroscientist in San Francisco.)
By Andrew Parker

As we age, so do our vision, reaction time, and motor skills. All these things are involved in operating a motor vehicle. As drivers on the road, it’s not only our safety but also the safety of other drivers and passengers we need to protect.

If your driving habits or the driving habits of an older loved one are starting to make you worry, you’re not alone. It’s a situation many people must eventually face. It can be difficult, as older men and women have a lifetime of driving experience behind them and they value the independence offered by the wheel.

Still, when safety is at stake, it’s important to know how to address this topic.

- Warn your loved one about your concerns. Ask if their driving abilities or the driving abilities of an older loved one are declining include the following:
  - Becoming easily distracted or agitated behind the wheel.
  - Frequent close calls or near collisions.
  - Forgetting directions and getting lost in familiar surroundings.

- Difficulty judging gaps in traffic or following traffic signs.
- Decreased reaction time for braking or confusing the brake with the gas pedal.

You may want to limit driving to necessary trips to the store or other familiar destinations.

If you’ve observed questionable driving by an older loved one, it may help to bring up what you saw with them. Since you’re afraid for their safety as well as others on the road.

You may want to bring other family members into the conversation. The concern of multiple people can help you illustrate your point.

Seek professional help from a physician, counselor, or trusted friend. This can provide needed objectivity in looking at all the information available and allow for a candid, yet caring conversation.

Request a driving test. This can include an eye exam and a ride-along driving check-up. To learn more, contact your local office of motor vehicles.

Be patient, but persistent. You may not succeed in the first conversation, but don’t give up. It’s important your loved one understands your concern and, if necessary, hands over the keys.

The loss of independence can be a devastating blow to an active older adult. It’s vital to make every effort to maintain their lifestyle so they see their usual activities of church, community, etc. are still possible.

It’s worth exploring ways to give some control to older adults who stop driving by treating him or her as a cherished person. Where possible, show dependence on the older man or woman in another way like spending extra time together.

Putting kindness and careful thought into handling this touchy event makes life safer and more pleasant for all involved.

(Parker is the founder and CEO of Papa, a service providing assistance and companionship to older adults and families. For more information, visit joinpapa.com.)

Are you still a safe driver?

Humane Society grant to help older adults license their pets

The Nebraska Humane Society has received a grant to help men and women over age 65 in Omaha, Gretna, and Ralston with the cost of licensing their pets. For more information, please call 402-905-3474 or send an email to cdoerr@nehumanesociety.org.

Per city ordinances, men and women age 65 and older in Bellevue, La Vista, Papillion, Springfield, Unincorporated Sarpy County, and Waterloo may license their altered pets at no charge. For more information, please call 402-905-3474 or send an email to cdoerr@nehumanesociety.org.

Pets must be licensed every year. For more information on older adults’ pet licensing options, log on to nehumanesociety.org.

For consumer health and safety as well as the welfare of Humane Society staff, pet owners are asked to license their pets by mail, at participating vet clinics, or online at nehumanesociety.org.

A mail slot also will be available at the Nebraska Humane Society – 8929 Fort St. – for persons who want to drop off their pet license payments in person. Persons choosing this option will receive a receipt by mail.

Pet licenses are due by March 15 each year. The Nebraska Humane Society encourages pet owners to license their pets for 2021 as soon as possible.

AARP Tax-Aide program

AARP is offering free income tax preparation services to older adults and low-income taxpayers again this year. Due to the pandemic, however, several changes are required in 2021.

Beginning Saturday, Feb. 20 taxpayers can leave a message at one of the telephone numbers listed below. AARP volunteers will return the messages to the taxpayers explaining the virtual tax preparation process which is scheduled to begin in March.

At least initially, there will be no in-person tax preparation. The Tax-Aide volunteers will provide instructions on how to scan and upload the tax documents. There will be limited opportunities for taxpayers without email access to make an appointment for an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer to scan and upload the tax documents for the taxpayer.

It’s essential for taxpayers to complete the Tax-Aide intake and interview forms prior to their appointment. There will also be a new form authorizing the electronic return of their tax documents.

Here are the phone numbers to contact:

402-577-0367
402-590-8140
402-913-0525
402-885-9951

New Horizons

New Horizons is the official publication of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging. The paper is distributed free to people over age 60 in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Washington, and Cass counties. Those living outside the 5-county region may subscribe for $5 annually.

Address all correspondence to: Jeff Reinhardt, Editor, 4780 S. 131st Street, Omaha NE 68137-1822. Phone 402-444-6654. FAX 402-444-3076. E-mail: jeff.reinhardt@enoa.org

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

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 12 hours of additional training every two years.

The next Long-term Care Ombudsmen training sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 17 and Friday, Feb. 19.

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

Before being assigned to a long-term care facility or an assisted living community where they’ll visit for two hours a week to meet with administrators, residents, and the residents’ family members to address concerns. For more information about ENOA’s Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, please call Beth Nodes at 402-444-6536.

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

For more information about ENOA’s Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, please call Beth Nodes at 402-444-6536.

Take it one step at a time

Heart Health Month is the perfect time to make some changes in your lifestyle

By Jen Beck

February brings celebrations aplenty. In the shortest month of the year, you can celebrate a groundhog and the hope winter is rounding the corner, loving your friends, family, and partners, Black History month, Presidents Day, National Letter of Intent Signing Day for the college sports enthusiast, and heart month, to name a few.

Since 2004, the American Heart Association has claimed this month to educate and celebrate your heart health.

Spend time this month taking care of your heart and overall health.

While heart disease is the number one cause of death for men and women, it’s easy to care for this vital organ. The American Heart Association suggests healthy eating, a healthy lifestyle, and incorporating fitness into a daily routine.

With so many other things to fit into the day, it can be overwhelming to create a meal plan and an exercise schedule. If you’re new to fitness and exercise, consult with your physician before grabbing the weights and using a treadmill, but there’s no better time than now to start.

Movement is the most important element to exercise; whatever you do, just keep moving. Starting today, if the snow and ice cooperate, take a walk to the end of the block and back. If your hips and knees are ready, take the steps instead of the elevator.

Marathons and body building aren’t required at this stage, but simple, small steps to fitness and exercise will make a tremendous difference in your heart health.

While you’re adding small changes in your fitness, how about adding some color into your diet. Fresh fruits and vegetables are an easy change, but frozen veggies will add color and wellness to your diet. Try a lean fish once next week and incorporate whole grains to your breakfast toast.

Again, the key is simple and small changes to keep your ticker moving and keep you chasing the grandkids for many years.

Lastly, it’s equally important to take care of your lifestyle. If you find yourself anxious or worrisome, talk to your doctor about ways to reduce stress in your life. Extra stress and anxiety take a toll on your heart.

If you’ve been trying for years to stop smoking, now’s the time. Set a goal to stop smoking by the end of the summer and work toward it every day.

Incorporate gratitude; at the end of every day, write down three things you can appreciate.

Take small steps to better heart health this February. Whether your first step is to the gym for low impact water aerobics or to simply a reach for the banana instead of a higher fat snack, your heart will thank you and your family and friends will embrace your new healthy approach to living.

It’s truly never too late to start, and your physician can help you develop a wellness plan that works best for your lifestyle. Whatever you celebrate in February, make sure living well is on top of that list.

(Bean is with Midwest Geriatrics, Inc. in Omaha.)

Live Healthy

Spend less on your prescriptions with the FREE Douglas County Prescription Discount Card

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

AVERAGE SAVINGS OF 20%!

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

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

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

NACo

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

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I dislike wasting stuff. My parents were products of the Great Depression and carried a frugal mentality through their lives. They passed this ethic on to their kids. To this day, I have a hard time throwing out food that’s well beyond “freshness.” Expiration dates aren’t to be taken seriously, right? This compulsion not to waste affects other aspects of my life—like how I spend money, conserving water, turning off lights, and turning down the heat. I’m a good recycler, always trying to save plastic containers and newspapers. These are all small things that work for me because of the way my parents raised me. I learned resources are limited and it makes sense to steward them well.

Lately I’ve been thinking of other kinds of wasting. Do I fritter away my time? Do I waste opportunities for growth? Related to the pandemic, we’re all experiencing what am I wasting? Living through a crisis never leaves us the same. We emerge as either better or worse. Every crisis encompasses danger and opportunity. They either defeat us or we learn valuable lessons.

This pandemic interruption in our lives has stirred anger, resentment, and animosity for many. We see these emotions acted out by those who find reality too difficult to accept. Rather than coming together, there’s a tendency to assign blame, disparaging others. Sad to say, those who emerge from this pandemic with bitterness will have wasted a giant growth opportunity.

What is it then that we can learn if we choose not to waste this growth opportunity? There’s lessen of resilience. No difficulty needs to be the final word on how we respond. By focusing on hope for a better future, we can endure many disappointments.

If we missed a family Christmas this year, we look forward to a wonderful celebration next year. If we miss our grandkids’ hugs now, we know we’ll cherish them even in the future. We find a way to bounce back. Another lesson is that we experience the preciousness of life itself. We’re all fragile and have limited days on this earth. This awareness is an invitation to cherish the time we have since there are no guarantees.

Don’t waste lessons learned during the pandemic

Conscious Aging
By Nancy Hemesath

The joy of getting up each morning cannot be taken for granted. Any precaution we can take to care for ourselves and those around us is worth our effort. Noticing and enjoying the small things is what makes our lives worthwhile. These moments aren’t to be wasted.

Another value that emerges in this time of social distancing is the importance of relationships. Busy schedules often lead to taking others for granted. By slowing our activities, we have more time to listen to those closest to us. Whether this be in person, by phone, or on ZOOM, we have the opportunity to support those who are having a particularly tough time. We can listen to the grieving or encourage those who are unemployed. We can make sure no one is left feeling alone and unsupported.

This might mean one of the friendships or intensifying the connections we’ve maintained. If we emerge from this pandemic with greater love for those around us, we know this time hasn’t been wasted. It may be a valuable exercise to list any benefits we have experienced through the past year. Then as we get our vaccinations and get back to a “normal” life, we can choose to continue the good we’ve experienced.

We’ll never go back to being quite the same person. We’ll be better for all we’ve undergone if we choose to be. Then we’ll know this pandemic year hasn’t been a waste. (Hemesath is the owner of Encore Coaching. She’s dedicated to supporting people in the Third Chapter of Life. Contact her at nhemesath@cox.net.)

McAlister’s Deli donates funds to Meals on Wheels

McAlister’s Deli, through its Warming Up the Community campaign, has donated $1,915 to the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging’s Meals on Wheels Program. During November 2020, a portion of the proceeds from soup sales at McAlister’s 47 locations, including 603 S. 72nd St. in Omaha – was donated to Meals on Wheels programs in the United States.

Across the country, McAlister’s raised $120,000 from the Warming Up the Community effort. Of that total, $90,000 was donated to Meals on Wheels America.

Nebraska Caregiver Coalition

The Nebraska Caregiver Coalition is offering a series of four virtual workshops designed to provide training, education, support, and resources for family caregivers. Each session will run from noon to 1 p.m.

The first educational workshop on Transitioning to Senior Care Living Communities will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 17. This presentation will feature three speakers sharing information to answer the questions: How do I know when or if it’s time to move to a senior community? Who can help us navigate the decision or journey? “What do I do with all of my STUFF?”

To register for this event, please visit: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqduirrTM- fC559xR9uonMqLT9OITE_nB6

Additional presentations include Self Care for the Caregiver on May 19, Pharmaceutical Focus of Caregiving on August 18, and Caregiving: My Heart Sees Your Heart; Discovering the Joys and Benefits of Respite on Nov. 17.

For more information and to register, please visit: https://go.unl.edu/caregivers

While there is no cost to attend these virtual workshops, registration is required.

Contact her at nhemesath@cox.net.

Reflects donations through January 22, 2021.
Men and women age 55 and older who want to earn a tax-free stipend while making an impact in their community are encouraged to join the Senior Companion Program and the Foster Grandparent Program.

Sponsored locally by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, the SCP and FGP are national programs of AmeriCorps Seniors, formerly the Senior Service Corps. Senior Companions help other older adults maintain their independence by visiting them at home to discuss the news, read mail, play cards, run errands, etc.

Foster Grandparents serve as positive role models for children who need special attention with education, healthcare, and social development in schools, Head Start programs, and child development centers.

SCP and FGP volunteers must meet income guidelines and complete an enrollment process that includes references and background checks.

In exchange for volunteering 10 hours or more per week, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions receive a $3 an hour tax-free stipend, mileage reimbursement, an annual physical examination, supplemental accident insurance coverage, and other benefits including an annual recognition luncheon.

The stipend does not interfere with rent, disability, Medicaid, or other benefits.

For more information on the FGP and SCP, please call 402-444-6536.

Consider becoming a Senior Companion, Foster Grandparent.

Programs offer a $3 an hour tax-free stipend.

The Douglas County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention want to educate Nebraskans about COVID-19.

The DCHD, working with colleagues at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Medicine, has created a COVID-19 information line at 402-444-3400. The information line will be open seven days a week (until further notice) from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Callers will be able to have their questions answered in Spanish and English.

“Our website and social media platforms will continue to provide the best and most current information,” said Douglas County Health Director Dr. Adi Pour.

Dr. Pour said the best advice to avoid the COVID-19 is to practice good hygiene like you would with the seasonal flu. Good hygiene includes:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer is a second option.
- Don’t touch your mouth, nose, or eyes, especially with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home while you’re sick.
- Wear a mask when around other people.
- Don’t cough or sneeze into your hands.
- Frequently clean and disinfect your home, car, and workplace

A COVID-19 vaccine isn’t widely available yet. Most people have recovered by drinking lots of fluids, resting, and taking pain and fever medication. If symptoms worsen, medical care might be needed.

The Metro Women’s Club of Omaha’s motto is “Extending the hand of friendship.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, all Metro Women’s Club of Omaha events are on hold until further notice.

For more information, please go online to metrowomensclub.org.
Disaster Relief Line offers free legal advice during the pandemic

Nebraskans who have questions or who are experiencing legal problems due to the coronavirus/COVID-19 public health emergency can get legal advice and help through the free COVID-19 Disaster Relief Hotline.

Hosted by Legal Aid of Nebraska, working closely with the Nebraska State Bar Association’s Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP), this hotline aims to make key legal assistance easy and accessible.

Individuals and businesses that don’t qualify for Legal Aid’s free services will be directly referred to the Volunteer Lawyers Project.

If you’re a Nebraskan facing legal issues related to the virus, or the owner of a small, locally-owned business (less than 50 employees, and not a franchise) that’s closed, in risk of permanent closure due to the virus, and where the payment of fees would significantly deplete your resources, the hotline may be reached at 1-844-268-5627.

Callers will be connected to the hotline’s voicemail. Callers should leave their name, phone number, brief details of the problem and the assistance needed, and in what county they’re located.

Callers will receive a call back from an experienced Legal Aid staff member. Individuals and businesses that don’t qualify for Legal Aid’s free services will be directly referred to the VLP. The VLP will work to place cases with Nebraska volunteer lawyers who will provide free legal assistance.

The types of legal issues associated with COVID-19, and focused on by the hotline include:

• Tenants with rent issues, including those facing eviction.
• Debt problems, including debtors with garnishments or who are ordered to appear at a debtor’s exam.
• Mortgage foreclosures, including advising on options for delinquent payments.
• Unemployment insurance denials.
• Employee rights, including sick leave and wage payments.
• Government benefits available to low-income persons such as ADC, SNAP, AABD, and SSI.
• Medicaid and medical insurance claims.
• Drafting wills, health care power of attorney, and transfer on death deeds.
• Domestic abuse and safety issues.
• Elder abuse and exploitation.
• Access to education.
• Helping small, locally-owned businesses with business and employment related matters, including human relations issues, unemployment benefits, and contracts.

More information on these legal issues, including ways you can directly help yourself, are available at legalaidofnebraska.org.

Beware of COVID-19 vaccine scams

Medicare covers the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you, so if anyone asks you to share your Medicare number or pay for access to the vaccine, you can bet it’s a scam.

Here’s what you need to know:
• You can’t pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
• You can’t pay to get early access to a vaccine.
• Don’t share your personal or financial information if someone calls, texts, or emails you promising access to the vaccine for a fee.
• Con artists may try to get your Medicare number or personal information so they can steal your identity and commit Medicare fraud. Medicare fraud results in higher health care costs and taxes for everyone.

Protect yourself from Medicare fraud. Guard your Medicare card like it’s a credit card.

Remember:
• Medicare will never contact you for your Medicare number or other personal information unless you’ve given them permission in advance.
• Medicare will never call you to sell anything.
• You may get calls from people promising you things if you give them a Medicare number. Don’t respond.
• Medicare will never visit you at your home.
• Medicare can’t enroll you over the phone unless you called it first.
• Check regularly for Medicare billing fraud. Review your Medicare claims and Medicare Summary Notices for any services billed to your Medicare Number you don’t recognize.

Report anything suspicious to Medicare. If you suspect fraud, call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Aging with Passion & Purpose Conference
Monday, March 15, 2021

This year’s featured speakers will be:

Jeffrey P. Gold, MD
Steven Wensel, MD
Adi Pour, PhD

Unmasking COVID-19 is presented online at no cost to participants. The event is hosted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha with 6.25 continuing education contact hours provided by Nebraska Methodist College Professional Development.

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This eighth biennial conference will focus on the implications of COVID-19 on older adults from a biopsychosocial perspective.

A special memorial will be held during the conference to honor persons lost to COVID-19.

Registration, which is due by 5 p.m. on Monday, March 8 can be made online at gerontology.unomaha.edu/conference

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Enoa
Keene

February 2021 • New Horizons • Page 7
As ‘Star’ publisher, Sanders feels responsible for reporting the truth

The Star’s office at 2216 N. 24th St. is on the National Register of Historic Places.

By Leo Adam Biga
Contributing Writer

O maha native Symone Sanders has enjoyed a fast rise as a national Democratic Party strategist and a senior political adviser. She served as press secretary for Bernie Sanders during his 2016 presidential bid. Now she’s chief spokesperson for Vice President Kamala Harris at the White House. What some don’t know is that Symone’s mother, Terri Sanders, is a community change agent and media veteran in Omaha who recently took the permanent reins as publisher of The Omaha Star newspaper.

Together, the Sanders own an unprecedented lineage as communications professionals among Omaha mother-daughter tandems. Part of that lineage is their respective roles in the Black woman legacy that distinguishes The Star.

From the newspaper’s 1938 founding by Mildred Brown who ran things until her death in 1989, to her successor, niece Marguerita Washington, through Phyllis Hicks, Frankie Williams, and now Terri Sanders, The Star has been led by women.

Though Symone was never the newspaper’s publisher, she did write for the paper and won a scholarship from the Mildred D. Brown Memorial Study Center, which now owns and manages the publication. Terri wrote a fashion column for The Star as a Beltway insider and Terri is one proud mother, there’s more to this dynamic older adult’s story than being the mother of Symone Sanders. Start with the revealing self-description of the book No, You Shut Up: Speaking Truth to Power and Reclaiming America, is known for her own frankness and settle-for-nothing-but-the-best approach. It’s clear the apple did not fall far from the tree.

Terri recently shared a “personal philosophy” for life that further reflects both her and her daughter’s live-out-loud attitude.

“When I go, I want to have burned the candle at both ends, straight up the middle, and leave nothing but dust.”

Terri is a graduate of Omaha Central High School and Creighton University, one every day. I got a chance to work on those flowers when I was learning to make corsages.”

In a life of full circle experiences, Sanders never suspected from those early brushes with Brown and The Star that she would one day be in the succession line as publisher.

“It’s phenomenal to me I am here today having done that back then. Given the honesty of The Star’s coverage of civil rights during Jim Crow and its history of uninterrupted publication, I feel a responsibility to report the truth and to not miss an issue.”

The paper has survived the COVID-19 crisis without a hitch, retaining its core advertisers at a time when many print publications struggle holding their own. Sanders knows The Star’s no longer the once indispensable news and information source it once was due to today’s plethora of content-rich online platforms. But she plans to make it a must-read again capturing new subscribers and regular followers as she can from the city’s African American base.

I think there are people we don’t reach because they’re not avid readers or they don’t know what The Omaha Star is, or because they get their news and information online. In 2021 I’m going to introduce what I call Omaha Star 3.0, where I do interviews, podcasts, Facebook Lives, Instagram Lives with people in our community who have an interesting story, including entrepreneurs, and then follow up with a story about them in the paper.

“We have to bring The Omaha Star to where the people are and engage them in the way they consume content. We need to engage millennials or the paper will die”.

Terri also has a goal to return The Star to being a weekly paper – it’s presently a bi-weekly – in perhaps 2022. She said its older subscriber base misses the weekly Star and it only makes sense to keep the paper in front of people and events.

“You can’t make that kind of change in the middle of the stream,” she added.

Sanders feels the weight of tradition and her take-all-that-life-has-to-offer mindset comes from her late parents, Opal and James McAlistor, and other influential older adults whose zeal for life and work rubbed off on her.

Terri’s mother was from Tennessee and her father from Kansas. The pair met in Omaha where the couple aspired to greater things. He was a porter for the Union Pacific Railroad. She was a seamstress and a cosmetologist. Terri entered the world as a bonus baby 16 years after her only sibling, Juan. By the time of Terri’s arrival, her parents were older and brooked no nonsense.

“My parents owned their own business, McAlistor Beauty Supply. It was the first African American beauty supply in Nebraska. It started out in our basement. The insurance agent told my parents they could not have all those chemicals in the basement because it was a fire hazard, so they got a commercial location on the corner of 24th and Wirt (streets). My brother Juan had a photo studio in the same building which was right next to Reed’s Ice Cream."

Industrious by nature and nurture, Sanders adopted the strong work ethic and serious mojo of her parents, who didn’t coddle her but instead expected their daughter to exhibit maturity and responsibility.

“When I was in the second grade on Saturday mornings, I didn’t watch cartoons, I stocked beauty supply shelves, rode in the car for deliveries, hopped out, and took things into the beauticians and barbers,” she recalled.

Terri also worked at her aunt Edna Robinson’s north side florist shop, Robinson Flowers, one of the few Black-owned stores of its kind in Omaha then.

“So, I always knew about entrepreneurship and how it was not a hustle, it was a job.”

Star publisher Mildred Brown was perhaps Omaha’s most visible Black entrepreneur. “She was always present in the community,” Sanders said. “She was (seemingly) at every church function she could get to. If there was a photo studio in the same building which was right next to Reed’s Ice Cream.”

Brown cut quite a figure with her tailored dresses and jeweled corsages and as the face and voice of a Black community when it had precious few media outlets to tell its stories or air its concerns.

“I always knew about Mrs. Brown and The Omaha Star. I always read The Omaha Star. I thought she was a regal lady and someone that you could pattern yourself after working in the community – her elegance, grace, and her business mind,” Terri said.

Sanders played a small part in helping maintain Brown’s image.

“My Aunt Edna actually made the corsages Mrs. Brown wore. Mrs. Brown ordered seven three-flower white corsages every week. That was her standing order because she wore a fresh...
Terri's daughter, Symone Sanders, is Kamala Harris' national spokeswoman.

---Continued from page 8.

(Hicks), and then Frankie (Williams) – that's a lot of shoes to have to stand in. And you have to get it right.” Sanders said.

Her being there is no quirk as she prepared herself to be a journalist at Omaha Central High School where she wrote for the school paper and yearbook, and at Creighton University where she majored in public relations. That education, she said, “has served me well.”

In addition to Brown, Sanders looked up to another Omaha Black woman in media, Bertha Calloway, who worked at then-WOW TV before co-founding the Great Plains Black History Museum with her husband, James, in 1976.

Sanders, who assisted with cataloging artifacts in the museum’s earliest years, admired Calloway’s “ballsy and determined” drive to make the museum a reality against all odds.

Strong, accomplished Black women like Calloway and Brown surrounded Sanders, some as near as her own aunt and mother, and became her role models by osmosis.

“These were women in your everyday life. They were not cover stories in a magazine. They were people living their lives and doing what they did in their community.”

They showed Terri what was possible.

Sanders was smitten with the idea of working in the media and her ambition was realized as an on-air talent at Black-owned KOWH Radio while she was still in high school.

“I obtained my radio broadcast license with an endorsement at 16 years old,” said Sanders.

While attending college, Terri worked as a floor director and camera operator at KMTV. She helped lens the popular local show, Creature Feature, hosted by Dr. San Guinary (KMTV director John Jones), and participated in its on-set antics.

Meanwhile, Sanders developed a social conscience and civics bent from the activism she was exposed to at Omaha’s Zion Baptist Church, where her family attended services and events.

“My father was active with the local NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) chapter. His best friend was the president, Lawrence McVoy. I went to those meetings with my father at Zion. My father and mother were involved in the 4CL (Citizens Coordinating Committee for Civil Liberties). Because they had their own business, they may not have marched, but they certainly supported and attended meetings.

“Whenever Black speakers came to town like Tony Brown (journalist) or Stokely Carmichael (activist) my mother believed I should go and hear what they had to say. It didn’t matter that I was only 7 years old. What did that have to with anything? So, I’ve always had that kind of interest and upbringing. I always attended talks and meetings. I was just always around everything. That was important. I guess that’s where I get my community spirit.”

Then there’s the accountability Sanders felt to do the right thing.

“Businesspeople always knew who you were. You couldn’t go anywhere and somebody didn’t know you. That causes you to walk a little differently, to act a little differently because you know you’re going to get caught.”

Respecting the family name by acting appropriately was the expectation. “That was always impressed upon me,” Terri said.

Sanders parented the same way with her three children, holding them to high standards, taking them to otherwise adult events, all to help build their character and sense of self.

She made sure her children had something productive to do with their time. “You can’t just bump through life; you’ve got to

Please turn to page 10.
Sanders sees ‘Star’ as a catalyst for North Omaha’s revitalization

--Continued from page 9.

have a plan.’”

She also tried to imbue in her children a sense of “social responsibility” the same way it was modeled for her, which in turn become a way of life.

“It was just what I did and who I was. I’m keenly aware of the community vibe that was built within me and obviously that’s why I am dedicated to working in my community.

“I am planted in this community. I’m not going anywhere. I tell people I have only worked up and down 24th Street. I’ve never really worked anywhere else, and I’m very proud of that. That’s why I am so passionate to see that whatever is done in this corridor is done right.”

Most of Sanders’ formal schooling played out there, too (Lothrop Elementary, Central, Creighton). She chose Creighton to expand her horizons with folks from different backgrounds.

Terri remembers her Creighton years fondly.

“I had friends there from all over the country. When we had a vacation break, I went home with them. By the same token on weekends, they would come to my home, have dinner, (and) go to church. The education I received at Creighton prepared me to do anything I wanted.”

A lifelong affair with the South was initiated when Terri’s mother and a former classmate of hers in Tennessee conspired to have their daughters meet. Starting in middle school, a tradition ensued in which Sanders would travel every year to Memphis to spend Thanksgiving with her new friend, Beverly Hyter. That first trip in the late ‘60s, the girls attended a concert featuring Stax recording artists, including Isaac Hayes. The new gal pals bonded over music, boys, and Southern charm.

“I loved it. Memphis is a magical city,” Sanders said.

Terri and Hyter are still friends to this day. They talk at least twice a week. Memphis remains a muse away from home for Sanders, who claims the world is her stomping ground.

Upon graduating from college, Sanders wanted to live in the South because she enjoyed the people and food there, and because while the region has racist tendencies, for the most part, things are very progressive for Blacks in the South.

She fell in love with a Southern gentleman, Daniel E. Sanders. The Clarksdale, Miss. native was a U.S. Air Force dental technician stationed at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue when they met. They were separated temporarily when she took an insurance underwriter job in New Orleans and he got reassigned to Japan.

The couple married when Daniel got a new assignment. Son, Daniel II was born in Alaska. Daughters Symone and Averi were born in Omaha.

After retiring from the military, Daniel Sr. worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and later, in Metropolitan Community College’s buildings and facilities department.

He died in 2017 following a massive stroke. Sanders misses his steadiness, spirit, and the kind of person he was.

Over the years, Terri has worked as a self-employed seamstress, a certified balloon artist, a personal chef-caterer, and a wedding planner. She combined these and other services under TD Sanders & More.

“I could sew your wedding dress, plan your wedding, coordinate what happened the day of the event, and advise you on the best prices and items. At one time I sold cards, crafts, invitations, and stationery. I bought a hot press machine to make napkins and put impressions on rich southern cloth, something I could make it real special.”

She evolved the business into a technology concierge service to keep people connected with their personal, professional, and social networks.

Today at age 63, Terri prides herself on her tech savvy.

“I don’t let any technology pass me by. If I do not keep up with technology, I would not be able to keep up with my children.”

Before becoming The Omaha Star’s publisher in 2020, Terri was the vice president of marketing and development for Omaha’s Black History Museum in 2013 before becoming its executive director two years later.

“The museum had had non-functioning status for several years and I brought it back,” she said. “I coined the phrase, ‘the building is closed, but the museum is open.’ We took exhibits out to businesses and schools so they could see what the museum had.”

Sanders eventually found a temporary site for the museum at the Crossroads Mall. Her successor Eric Ewing arranged for its current space in the historic Jewell Building on North 24th Street.

Sanders’ resume also includes a stint as site manager for the Omaha Economic Development Corporation’s multi-million-dollar Fair Deal Village Marketplace, which includes a grocery store, restaurant, and shops at 2118 N. 24th St.

While the marketplace has struggled finding a steady clientele and keeping a restaurant on site, Sanders said it’s still viable but some of the paradigms have to shift.

She also worked as the office manager for the Seventy-Five North Revitalization Corp.

Then came her reconnection with The Star, whose pages she’d appeared in many times as a news subject or source.

Terri is also the executive director of the Mildred D. Brown Memorial Study Center on whose board she served.

She said her varied experiences have well prepared her for these jobs. “I think all the things I’ve done combined to bring me to where I am. I’m where I’m supposed to be.”

Her mission is to maintain The Star as a vital conduit for good news.

“I think The Omaha Star has contributed to the fabric of our community. It tells the story of the people. It may not be Omaha World-Herald news that your daughter was just accepted to an historically black college, but it’s news for The Omaha Star.

“I try to continue the legacy of telling the everyday story of successes (including business launches, job promotions, scholarships, and recognitions). I brought back the Family of the Week series. It was a staple of the paper. It’s important people know there are strong families in our community.”

She said the newspaper focuses on achievements, accomplishments, exemplary individuals and families to celebrate the community.

Sanders is proud to operate a business on North 24th Street, a district that’s still full of life today, even amid its vacant lots and abandoned buildings. She supports revitalization efforts happening there and feels The Star is a catalyst for change.

She believes the area is poised for new growth.

“T see it making a comeback. I’m aware of people developing some of these old buildings that have stood empty for years.”

Sanders said she is impressed by the energy and the passion of several dynamic young African Americans emerging as social entrepreneurs in Omaha.

Terri is mindful of finding someone to mentor as a potential successor at The Star one day.

“Yes, I am always looking for Black females who may have an interest. Maybe that person will come along, and when they do, I would like to help guide them into a leadership position.”

The Sanders family legacy is part of Omaha’s history. Terri and Symone are bound to be highlighted one day at the Great Plains Black History Museum for their respective feats.

“Everything has its time and place, so if it’s the time and the place, then great,” Terri said.

Sanders with a photo of Mildred Brown, who founded The Omaha Star in 1938.
Pharmacist recommends registering for a COVID-19 vaccination

By David Kohl, Pharm. D.

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eregistering for a COVID-19 vaccination may help you receive the vaccine sooner. Kohl’s opened a preregistration form (kohlslrx.com) in December 2020 and has already registered more than 17,000 individuals, many of whom are age 75 or older, and some with health comorbidities.

The state of Nebraska is also setting up a preregistration program for the vaccine which may be available by the time you read this article.

Based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention vaccination priority announcements, individuals who qualify for a vaccination may not have been notified yet because Kohl’s and other local providers haven’t received the vaccine for that group.

Kohl’s is administering the vaccine provided by local county health departments to nursing care facility residents and staff, persons with a developmental disability, and families that care for persons with a developmental disability.

Kohl’s has administered more than 3,000 doses of the vaccine so far to people in those groups. When Kohl’s receives vials of the vaccine designated for a specific group, men and women in that group will be notified via an email and/or text message based on the information provided by the consumer when registering. The email and text will contain a link to sign up for a date, time, and Kohl’s location for the vaccination.

Call 402-554-5961 to learn more

Healthy adults 19 to 90, caregivers needed for UNO Gerontology study

The University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Department of Gerontology is looking for healthy adults and caregivers for 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. Participation will involve an online, at-home component (seven hours over four days) and one in-person visit (two hours and 30 minutes) which will take place at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Compensation for study participation is available. Complementary parking is located a short walk from the lab.

The experiment involves completing online questionnaires/interviews and computer tasks, taking samples of saliva for hormone analyses, a blood draw for DNA methylation analyses, and undergoing brain imaging using functional magnetic resonance imaging.

To be eligible for the study, participants must be age 19 to 90, have a comprehension of written and spoken English, have completed a minimum of two years of high school or higher, have the mobility to travel to the UNMC campus, and have comorbidities.

Potential participants aren’t eligible for the study if they have a diagnosis of a neurological or psychiatric disease (e.g., stroke), a history of drug abuse, vision, hearing, cognitive, or motor difficulties, or if they’re pregnant, have metal implanted in their body, or are taking an antidepressant medication, a glucocorticoid-based oral medication or cream (e.g., prednisone, cortisone), or are on hormone replacement therapy.

For more information, please contact Janelle Beadle, Ph.D. at the Agnew Brain and Emotion Lab (402-554-5961) or by email at ABELabUNO@gmail.com.

It’s important for recipients to come to the vaccine site no more than 15 minutes before the scheduled vaccination time so social distancing can be maintained and vaccinations can be administered quickly and efficiently.

The COVID-19 vaccine is provided at no charge to consumers by the federal government. In some cases, Kohl’s and other providers are paid by insurance companies to administer the vaccine. There’s no copay or charge for the vaccine. It’s important for recipients to bring a copy of their insurance card with them when receiving the vaccination.

The federal government will pay for vaccine administration to the uninsured. Medicare Advantage plans don’t pay for the vaccine administration. These policies require consumers to provide the red, white, and blue Medicare card to pay for a vaccination.

After a vial of the COVID-19 vaccine is opened, persons giving the shots have six hours to administer the vaccinations. At the end of the day, leftover vaccine is administered to men and women designated by the counties, so none is ever wasted.

Information about the COVID-19 vaccine, its availability, and the vaccinations process is changing rapidly. Go to kohlslrx.com to learn more.

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.

Call 402-554-5961 to learn more

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

We want your Support!

I would like to become a partner with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, and help fulfill your mission with older adults.

ENOA

$30 = 7 meals or 1.5 hours of in-home homemaker services or 1 bath aide service for frail older adults.

$75 = 17 meals or 3.66 hours of in-home homemaker services or 3 bath aide services for frail older adults.

$150 = 35 meals or 7.3 hours of in-home homemaker services or 7 bath aide services for frail older adults.

$300 = 70 meals or 14.63 hours of in-home homemaker services or 14 bath aide services for frail older adults.

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:

These gifts are tax exempt.

Please mail your donation with this form to:

Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging
Attn: Jeff Reinhardt
4780 S. 131st Street
Omaha, NE 68137-1852
(402) 444-6654

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The garden season is filled with flowers and fragrances and many that generate fond memories of our past. Be sure to add some delightful fragrance to your gardens and create new memories by growing lovely lilies.

Most people have heard of and perhaps even grown the world’s most popular lily, Stargazer. This Oriental lily is reliable, compact, and early blooming. It will give you lots of big, colorful, and sweetly fragrant flowers. Spring blooms fill the spot in any garden but there are many other lilies to consider. Including several different types of lilies in your garden can extend the beauty and fragrance for months.

Start the lily season with a blast of color from Asiatic lilies. The variety of colors will brighten any garden bed and their lack of fragrance is a plus for those who are sensitive to strong scents.

Sunset Mix (longfield-gardens.com) includes an assortment of Asiatic lilies with large upward facing flowers of gold, rose, and apricot. Complement these warm hues with the deep maroon flowers of Mapira. Or mix things up with another collection of Asiatic lilies such as Summer Wine Mix with white, blush, pink, and burgundy blooms. Asiatics grow well in containers, too.

Add some light fragrance and color to the midsummer garden with Longiflorum (LA) lilies. These Asiatic (LA) lilies are hardy lilies. You’ll have lots of colors and heights to choose from including Dizzy with its crimson striped-white flowers. Casablanca blooms slightly later and its snow-white flowers measure 10 inches across perfuming the whole garden. Or add some distinctive color with the flowers of Salmon Star which feature yellow stripes and bright orange flecks.

Boost the end of the season display by planting some double Oriental lilies. Each of these flowers has a dozen or more extra petals which gives them a unique look that’s sure to command a second glance. The new Roselily series of double Orientals are outstanding cut flowers. Look for varieties such as pure white Aisha and hot pink Tatsjana.

Plant lily bulbs in spring or fall. Either way, you’ll enjoy their color throughout the summer. Ensure success by planting them in full sun and well-drained soil and protecting them from rabbits and deer. They are winter hardy in zones four to nine and can be grown as annuals in zones three, 10, and 11. For more growing tips, read Longfield Garden’s Eight Tips for Growing Better Lillies.

Whether you’re growing lilies for cutting, summer color, or to perfume the garden, you’ll want to find room for as many lilies as possible. These impressive, florist-quality flowers make a big impact in any size garden.

By Melinda Myers

Add fragrance, beauty, memories by growing lillies in your garden

Therapist: Hand is ingrained in everything the body does

Several intricate systems of the body must combine to perform even the simplest physical task. Yet, Sioux Falls, S.D. occupational therapist Kendra Harms has chosen to focus her career on a single set of appendages that in so many ways make it possible for us to function independently as humans.

Most physical activities involve the hands, said Harms, a certified hand therapist with Goodcare At Home Rehab in Sioux Falls. “The hand is probably the most intimate part of our bodies in that it’s most ingrained in everything we do.

“Whether it’s touching, feeling, gripping, pinching, holding, or whatever, there are few things that don’t involve the use of our hands.”

There are several certified hand therapists in the Omaha area that can help people maintain and restore function in response to an injury, surgery, chronic condition, or disorder that affects the use of their hands, wrists, and arms. This includes fractures and injuries due to falls, arthritic conditions in the hand, wrist, and elbow, nerve compressive disorders such as carpal tunnel syndrome, and post-surgical rehab and recovery.

Even those recovering from total hip and knee replacement disorders can benefit. Due to the long-term use of walkers, canes, and other adaptive devices, these patients may develop hand, wrist, and arm issues that affect their ability or willingness to move about their homes.

“I can treat everything from the cervical spine down – shoulders, elbows, forearms, wrists, and hands,” Harms said. “I’m often working to diminish the progressive nature of their disorder as in how can I preserve the joint while reducing pain?”

Therapists often include a focus on pain reduction, range of motion, strength, nerve sensation, and restoring function. This regularly involves teaching patients how to adapt to long and short-term limitations through modifications in the way they move and live.

When necessary, Harms and other certified hand therapists can also fabricate customized splints on site. Splints help protect patients’ hands, wrists, and arms and when performing specific functions (using walkers or canes) as well as enabling them to perform tasks required for personal independence and fulfillment (gripping a toothbrush.)

“Splints are most commonly used to position joints in resting or anatomical position in order to lesson deformity and injury to the joints and soft tissues of the hands and fingers – such as with arthritis,” Harms said.

Being able to see patients within their home environments, Harms says, goes a long way toward helping people more quickly recover and/or reestablish function and a sense of normalcy.

“I feel I’m able to bring patients the highest level of personalization if I’m seeing them in their home environment,” she said. “When I can see their space – what their day looks like, and what they have to manipulate, grab, use, lift, carry, and so on, I get the best idea of how to help them increase function, decrease pain, and adapt to their environment.”

Harms said when you lose the use of your hand or hands, you also lose more than 50 percent of your upper-extremity function.

“Someone loses hand function, and it’s down to one hand, how do you cut a steak or button a shirt?” she said. “Hand function is a big deal for people, their lives, and their independence.”

Meals on Wheels needs you

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging is looking for volunteer drivers for its Meals on Wheels Program.

Flexible weekday schedule delivering midday meals to homebound older adults in the greater Omaha area.

Call Arlis at 402-444-6766 for more information.

Receive a FREE copy of the New Horizons in your mailbox each month.

To be added to our mailing list, please call 402-444-6654 or send an email to jeff.reinhardt@enoa.org

Please provide your name and complete mailing address with zip code when ordering.

Omaha Fire Department

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

To have a free smoke and/or carbon monoxide detector installed inside your home, send your name, address, and telephone number to: Omaha Fire Department

Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Requests

1516 Jackson St.
Omaha, Neb. 68102

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

Mizzou divorce study

Researchers at the University of Missouri’s Love After 60 Lab want to collect stories about the divorce process and post-divorce life from older men whose divorce was legalized at age 55 or older. Interviews are confidential and will be conducted via video conferencing software (e.g. Zoom) or phone.

All participants will receive $50 compensation for completing an interview.

If you are interested in participating, please email our research team at LoveAfter60Lab@missouri.edu or call 573-882-4399.

For more information, please contact the lead researcher, Dr. Jacqueline Benson, at bensonjj@missouri.edu
Thank You!

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging staff would like to thank the following businesses, churches, individuals, and organizations that purchased more than 1,000 Christmas gifts for 493 ENOA clients in 2020. This list also features the names of businesses, churches, organizations, and individuals who donated money, clothing, paper products, cleaning supplies, and toiletries for the men and women the agency serves in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass, and Washington counties.

Barb Parolek
BLUEBARN Theater
Cindy Kirstine
CORE Bank
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging staff members
Home Instead Senior Care Omaha
Karen Paschal
Linda Ivory
Lorey Kirstine
Notre Dame Alumni Club of Omaha
Omaha Fire Department
Omaha Senior Resource Group

Paula Stanton
Rebecca Frans/College of St. Mary
Ryan & Maria Headley
St. Gerald’s Catholic Church
SeniorHelp Program volunteers
Senior Life Solutions-Memorial Community Hospital & Health System (Blair)
Trader Joe’s
St. Patrick’s Catholic Church (Fremont)
Scheels
United Republic Bank
The 211 telephone network has been established in parts of Nebraska to give consumers a single source for information about community and human services. By dialing 211, consumers can access information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The information is also available online at ne211.org.

We’re here to help you stay healthy!

The men and women of Midwest Geriatrics are dedicated to keeping you happy, healthy, and living life to the fullest.

Call 402-827-6000 to learn more about:
- Florence Home Healthcare
- Royale Oaks Assisted Living
- House of Hope Assisted Living
- House of Hope Memory Care
- Gerimed & Unimed Pharmacies

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging has been providing programs and services for older adults in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass, and Washington counties since 1974.

Help bring elder abuse out from the shadows

Each year, as many as 5 million older Americans are abused, neglected, or exploited. (Only one in six of these men and women, however, report their abuse to authorities.)

Join the fight against elder abuse!

Warning signs include slap marks, unexplained bruises, malnutrition, withdrawal from normal activities, and sudden changes in finances.

To report adult abuse in Nebraska, call Adult Protective Services (toll free) at 300-652-1999.

Aging with Passion & Purpose Conference will be held online on Monday, March 15

The eighth biennial Aging with Passion & Purpose Conference, titled Unmasking COVID-19 is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, March 15. To help ensure the safety and health of each presenter and participant, all conference activities will be held online.

Unmasking COVID-19 is being provided at no cost to participants. The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) is hosting the event and 6.25 continuing education contact hours will be provided by Nebraska Methodist College Professional Development, a continuing nursing education provider approved by the Midwest Multistate Division, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

The conference will focus on the implications of COVID-19 on older adults from a biopsychosocial perspective including disparities across cultural groups and provide an overview of where the nation has been, the status of the pandemic, and offer an up-to-date view of where Americans are heading as they battle the coronavirus.

Conference participants will gain hope from lessons learned and insights into the future from healthcare and human services experts, as well as hearing personal experiences from men and women on the pandemic’s frontline.

Persons lost to COVID-19 will be honored with a planned memorial during the conference.

Featured speakers will include Dr. Jeffrey Gold, chancellor of UNO and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), Dr. Adi Pour, director of the Douglas County Health Department, and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus Wellness at UNO and UNMC Dr. Steven Wengel.

There will also be two panel presentations and discussions facilitated by Cathy Pacholski of the Art of Aging, Inc., Denise Hyde from Eden Alternative, and Lakelyn Hogan of Home Instead Senior Care.

The first panel will feature front-line long-term care workers from Bethany Heights Assisted Living, Hillcrest Home Care Omaha, Hillcrest Caring Companions, and Brighton Gardens of Omaha.

The second panel will include Anahi Reynoso from the Intercultural Senior Center, Immanuel’s Cameo Rogers, Wendy Goldber of the Tri-Faith Initiative, and Lauren DeGroot of Adaptive Advice, LLC.

Some of the sessions will be live while others will be recorded by UNO-TV. Participants will have an opportunity to submit questions and comments.

Conference registration, which is due by 5 p.m. on Monday, March 8, can be made online at gerontology.unomaha.edu/conference.

Planning partners for Unmasking COVID-19 are Nebraska Methodist College, Immanuel, the Nebraska Mental Health & Aging Coalition, UNO’s Department of Gerontology, UNO’s Grace Abbott School of Social Work, the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, the University of Nebraska-Kearney, the Intercultural Senior Center, Pando Geriatric Counseling, and the Art of Aging, Inc.
Panel lists most stressful years ever in American, world history

The year 2020 may have been the most traumatic of all for many, but it wasn’t the most stressful year ever in American history, according to an international panel of historians asked to judge the matter. That title belongs to 1862, the darkest year of the Civil War, which was deemed the most stressful in U.S. history by the 28 American and British historians consulted by Bloom, the self-therapy app that uses personalized video sessions to help users cope with stress, anxiety, and depression.

At least one historian chose each of the following years, ranked in order by the years chosen by the most historians.

• 1862: The darkest year of the Civil War.
• 1929: The Wall Street Stock Market crash sparks the start of the Great Depression that will last much of the 1930s.
• 1838: The still new United States starts pushing thousands of Cherokees off their land in mid-winter on the murderous trek known as the “Trail of Tears.”
• 1968: A year of riots, protests, violence, and the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy.
• 1944: The Cuban Missile Crisis when the Cold War almost turned hot.
• 2001: The United States is shaken by the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the American mainland.
• 2020: The USA-records more COVID-19 deaths than any other year due to the unemployment rates, political divisions, and the presidential election is supremely bitter.

Last year was very stressful, according to Leon Mueller, Bloom’s CEO. “We wondered what other years had people human resolve as much – or even more.”

Patient support, contact your local SMP program.

(Administration for Community Living provided this information.)

Protect yourself against Medicare fraud

Every day, Medicare fraud affects people and their families across the United States – regardless of their background. It’s not just the Medicare program that suffers when fraud occurs. Patients may also discover they can’t get the health care they need.

If someone obtains your Medicare number, they can make charges that may exhaust your benefit allotment. If they charge Medicare for medical visits you never made or equipment you didn’t purchase, your number could be flagged for overuse, and doctors may refuse to see you. These are just examples of how fraud can end up hurting you directly.

Scammers know the ins and outs of the Medicare system and their attempts can be well thought out. It’s not always easy to know when and where fraud is occurring. By remembering some simple but effective tips, you can protect yourself against scams, including identity theft and prescription drug fraud.

Remembering to protect, detect, and report fraud helps everyone, including you.

• Protect: Protecting your personal information is your best line of defense against health care fraud. Treat Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security numbers like credit card numbers. Never give them to a stranger and don’t carry your cards unless you need them for appointments.

Medicare doesn’t call or visit to sell you anything. Outside of a trusted health care setting, never give this information to anyone who asks for it.

• Detect: No matter how careful you are, you may be targeted for fraud. Always review your Medicare statements closely. Keep looking to include charges for something you didn’t purchase or receive, duplicate charges, and charges for services not ordered by your doctor.

Compare these documents to your personal records and receipts. Recording medical visits and procedures in a journal or on a calendar can help you keep track of what happened at each appointment and make it easier to spot inaccuracies.

• Report: If you suspect you’ve been a target of fraud, report it to the authorities. This can help you and others at risk for fraud. If you have questions about your Medicare statements, call your health care provider.

If you’re uncomfortable calling or are not satisfied with the response, help is available through your local Senior Medicare Patrol. SMP volunteers work with Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers to stop health care fraud, errors, and abuse.

You can also report suspicious calls and ask general questions through this resource. You can find your local SMP program by calling 1-877-808-2468 or online at SMPResource.org.

Suspected fraud also can be reported to 1-800-Medicare or by calling 1-800-HHS-TIPS.

Don’t hesitate if you need help. Funded by the Administration for Community Living, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the SMP programs provide outreach, counseling, and education by highly-trained volunteers in a variety of locations. For free, confidential support, contact your local SMP program.

(Administration for Community Living provided this information.)
In 1932, John G. Neihardt wrote the classic book *Black Elk Speaks*, an extended narration of the visions of Black Elk, an Oglala Lakota medicine man who lived from 1863 to 1950.

A graduate of Wayne State College, Neihardt is the Poet Laureate in Perpetuity of Nebraska. The John G. Neihardt State Historic Site was established in Bancroft, Neb. to commemorate the work of this noted writer, poet, and historian who lived from 1881 to 1973.

Black Elk fought in the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876 and survived the Wounded Knee Massacre 14 years later. *Black Elk Speaks* was written following a series of interviews Neihardt held in 1931 with Black Elk on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Black Elk’s Lakota words were interpreted into English by his son, Ben Black Elk.

These days, visitors are encouraged to stop by Black Elk-Neihardt Park, 80 acres of rolling hills established in 1975 on the northwestern edge of Blair, Neb. The Washington County park features a picnic shelter, playground, Frisbee golf course, paved walking trail, and the 44-feet tall Tower of the Four Winds, also known as the Black Elk Memorial.

The tower – dedicated in June 1987 – features a mosaic designed by F.W. Thomsen, an art professor emeritus at nearby Dana College which closed its doors in 2010.

Below and in front of the tower are plaques that include Black Elk’s interpretation of the four directional winds:

- **North:** Where the Great White Giant lives in power and the source of the cold and mighty winds which give strength and endurance.
- **East:** The source of the light of day and where the morning star lives. From the light of the east comes wisdom and understanding, and from understanding, peace.
- **South:** The source of summer and the power to grow.
- **West:** Where the thunder beings live. The thunder beings have the power to send rain or lightning as well as the power to bring life or to destroy.

Another nearby plaque at the site further describes the tower:

> The Universal Messiah with outstretched arms blessing all people stands within the tree of life. Around them is an ever-widening circle of light forming the hoop of the world which holds all living things. Singing birds fly between the cottonwood leaves radiating from this sacred tree. Two roads cross this hoop of the world.

Black Elk said: “The good road and the road of difficulties you have to cross and where they cross, that place is holy.”

Black Elk-Neihardt Park is located at the intersection of College Drive and North 32nd Street, the highest point in Blair. For more information, go to Blairnebraska.org/BlackElk-Neihardt Park.

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**Rural Transportation Program Changes**

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging’s Rural Transportation Program will no longer offer rides where both the origin and destination are within the boundaries that are defined by the US Census Bureau as Urbanized Omaha.

**Changes go into effect July 1, 2021.**

**ELIGIBLE TRIPS:**
- Urbanized Omaha to Rural
- Rural to Urbanized Omaha
- Rural to Rural

To Learn more please attend our virtual public hearing

**Monday, March 1, 2021**

at 1:30 PM

_Link to this hearing and a more detailed map may be found at enoa.org / Click on Resources_

Click on Rural Transportation Program

For more information, please call Brian Hatfield at 1-888-210-1093.