

Amazing Aging!

For Seniors and Those Who Love Them

A free publication of the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
Advocacy, Action and Answers on Aging for Shawnee, Jefferson and Douglas Counties

Winter 2016



Our Mission

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc. advocates on aging issues, builds community partnerships and implements programs within Shawnee, Jefferson, and Douglas counties to help seniors live independent and dignified lives.

- Is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization
- Is funded by tax-deductible contributions, federal funds, under state general funds and funds through local governments
- Does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, or disability



Four of JAAA's working moms pose with their happy handfuls. From left: Susan Harris with Frannie (2); Theresa Foster with Grace (2) and Caroline (10 months); April Maddox with Kendall (3); and Maggie Steiner-McMurphy with Katherine (14 months). Story on page three.

A Message from Jocelyn Lyons, JAAA Executive Director

We have all survived another year and many of us enter into the New Year with a vengeance: commanding ourselves to say once again, "We are going to lose the weight!!!" I can't count the number of times I've said it, adding "I'm going to do it this year!!"

As I gathered with girlfriends one evening, celebrating the New Year with a glass or two of wine, the subject of weight loss spilled from our mouths (or maybe not, since we are not ones to lose a drop of wine)! We spoke of our battle of the bulge and called off the investments we have made in exercise equipment. One extolled the amount of equipment she had in her home gathering dust in the attic, closets, basement and other nooks, which led me to brag about my purchases over time.



Jocelyn Lyons

I told the story of the equipment purchase I'm most proud of that has its own infomercial with a well-known celebrity demonstrating the physical value of the equipment. The equipment came with instructional DVDs so I could work out like a star and a diet plan to follow so I can lose weight as I work out, with the end result of looking like a movie star! I was ecstatic when my "personal trainer in a box" arrived.

I had to purchase a DVD player, ask my son to install it and demonstrate how to work the player, (which meant I had to hear another lecture of "I don't understand why it's so difficult for you to push this button, then this button, then this button..."), and move the furniture to make room for my "personal trainer."

I dressed properly in my cute new workout clothes and shoes, pushed the button to play, composed myself on my trainer and decided I should dismount and hydrate before beginning a vigorous workout. Allowing the video to continue to play (because I could catch up), I went to the refrigerator for a bottle of water. There before me were bottles of water and other assorted beverages. Well, considering I really had a taste for flavor, I poured a glass of wine, sat on my sofa, and watched the video, stating "I'll start tomorrow." That was the end of my personal trainer in the box. Tomorrow never came. My grandson moved it to my storage room to never see the inside of my home again. I vowed as did others in my support group, "No more exercise equipment purchases!" There it was ... my New Year's resolution!

We all laughed about our great intentions, equipment investments and failed attempts. I left the "support group" feeling good and smiling at this strong sisterhood that has developed over the years.

Arriving home, kicking off my shoes and getting very comfortable, I turned on the TV to one of

the home shopping networks. I couldn't believe my eyes or what I was hearing. There it was, a new piece of equipment that offered the best workout, targeting my most problem area. It was affordable; it was small enough to carry anywhere. I could take it to the office, travel with it, and fold it away to fit under my sofa! It had instructional DVDs. I continued to watch the demonstration which looked easy enough to me. With one minute left before the low price disappeared for the remainder of the year, I made the call!!! Dang, another New Year's resolution broken and it was only six days into the year!

Moral of the story: Drink plenty of water! Water contains no sugar, flour, saturated or trans fats, no sodium, no calories and zero points. Best of all, lifting cases of water promotes total body muscle, and when lifted properly, targets the core so you, too, can have tight abs!

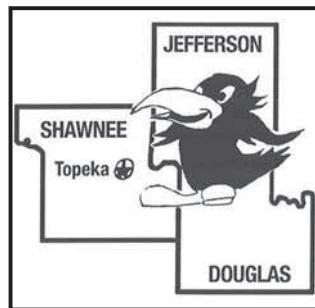
And now allow me to raise my bottle (of water) to toast the millions of "personal trainers in a box" that have taken up residence in our homes, collecting dust and, well, not looking very fit! Happy New Year!!!

- Amazing Aging is a publication of Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
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You are encouraged to write us at:

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
2910 SW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66611-2121
(800) 798-1366 or (785) 235-1367

Marsha Henry Goff, editor



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Amazing Aging strives to provide readers with the information they need to live independent and productive lives. We also seek to feature stories of seniors who are active as workers, volunteers or engaged in hobbies. If you know a senior you would like to see featured in a future issue, please contact editor Marsha Henry Goff at mhgink@netscape.net or write to her in care of JAAA, 2910 SW Topeka Boulevard, Topeka, KS 66611.

The babies of JAAA

By Marsha Henry Goff

When JAAA employees refer to the agency as “family,” they mean it! The agency’s policy of allowing babies up to four months of age to come to work with their mothers has been a boon for moms and babies. If productivity is occasionally negatively affected — and admittedly it sometimes is — both moms and management feel any temporary lack of productivity is balanced by a workforce that feels valued which results in employee retention. JAAA Executive Director Jocelyn Lyons also notes that working new mothers receive “assistance from other staff members and, in some cases, minimal work can be conducted from home or after normal business hours.”

Theresa Foster, case manager, states emphatically that “JAAA is the best place I have ever worked, hands-down. It’s not just flexibility with emergencies for children, but other emergent issues as well.” Part of the reason, she says, is because JAAA “is a second family to most of its employees.” Theresa’s daughters, Grace and Caroline, are currently cared for by a “JAAA relative” who is the sister of her co-worker Grace Reichle.

Both girls individually spent a month with their mother when she returned to work after a two-month maternity leave, the last six-weeks of which she spent doing some work from home. Theresa greatly appreciates the “bonding time” that period allowed her with her daughters, the “huge cost sav-

ings” of having them at JAAA for a month and the ability to breastfeed them. She says another benefit was that the girls “got to know and love a lot of my co-workers and vice-versa.”

After Caroline’s birth, Theresa and her husband questioned whether it would be more cost-efficient for her to return to work or become a stay-at-home-mother to raise their children. The decision to return to work was made when Grace’s sister agreed to look after both girls. The month at work with Caroline also enabled Theresa to “save up a few more funds in order to make that happen.”

Little Kendall Maddox was born before JAAA instituted its “bring your baby to work” policy. When her mother, April Maddox, case management program manager, returned to work after maternity leave, Kendall went directly to her grandmother. “It’s easier when you know the person watching your child loves them as much as you,” says April, who knows that “transitioning back to work after maternity leave is extremely difficult and emotional!”

In her supervisory role, April believes that “it is very beneficial to have this policy to assist our employees with the transition. It can make productivity less during certain times but I also know that the “mental health or emotional health” of our employees is also very important. Allowing an easier transition, I think, prevents more days off as time goes on because they have been able to provide that



Nyree Brooks-Green was on maternity leave when the group photo was taken. Maggie Steiner-McMurphy snapped this photo of her with Cecelia (almost 2 months) when they dropped by JAAA to visit.

primary care for their child during the first few weeks of life.”

April appreciates that “JAAA was and always has been very flexible when it comes to me participating in the important activities in my babies’ lives. I have been able to take time to attend parties at school, take them to doctor’s appointments and stay home with them when they are sick. This

also included time to take breaks during the day to pump in order to still breastfeed when I came back to work.”

Susan Harris, ADRC (aging and disability resource center) manager says she was not the “typical first-time mom” because, while she appreciated the opportunity to bring little Frannie to work and

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Douglas County seniors support JAAA's CHAMPSS program

By Marsha Henry Goff

To say that JAAA's CHAMPSS nutrition program is popular in Douglas County is an understatement. Currently, 848 Douglas County residents are enrolled and that number grows significantly with each orientation session. After a Lawrence *Journal-World* article and subsequent editorial about the program, 101 people attended the next orientation at the Lawrence Public Library and others, regrettably, had to be turned away for lack of space.

In Baldwin City, where CHAMPSS debuted at Baker on January 4, the program is equally popular with around 35 people signing up at each orientation. CHAMPSS has been a successful program in Shawnee and Jefferson counties for several years. Signing up to become a cardholder is easy: simply attend an orientation session where the program is

explained and individuals 60 and older may apply for the swipe card that allows them to eat one nutritious meal daily — their choice of breakfast, lunch or dinner — seven days a week. The suggested donation per meal is \$3.00 and up to 12 meals may be loaded onto the card. Instructions for reloading cards are given at orientation sessions.

The swipe cards may be used at any CHAMPSS location in Douglas, Jefferson or Shawnee County: one location in Baldwin City, five in Lawrence, six in Topeka and one each in Oskaloosa and Valley Falls. Cardholders in all three counties may reload their cards by calling JAAA with a credit or Vision card or by using our website (www.jhawkaa.org). Cards may also be reloaded by mailing a check or dropping by our Topeka office with a check or cash. In Lawrence, cardholders may call 842-0754 to make an appointment to drop by our office in Independence, Inc. to refill their cards.



There were no empty seats at the last CHAMPSS orientation at Baldwin City Public Library.

Not only does CHAMPSS provide seniors with good nutrition, the social aspect of the program is equally important. Seniors enjoy

being with people of all ages and having the option of choosing where, when and what to eat . . . just like everyone else.

Babies of JAAA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

enjoyed the time spent with her, she felt conflicted about the impact of her baby's "demands and distraction" on her work. Susan spent time working nights and weekends at home after Frannie was in bed and was excited to take her to daycare the first day because "I knew that finally I would be able to get work done while at work." Indeed, Susan says she "got a lot more done without her help."

Susan admits that "from a supervisory standpoint with regard to productivity, I feel that having the babies here does affect productivity negatively, not just the productivity of the parent, but of other staff members as well. It is difficult

to concentrate on tasks that need done when you have the baby not cooperating and distracting you."

She says the flexibility that JAAA offers her as a parent is "outstanding! I know that if she is sick or if something comes up that I can be off work and do what needs to be done for my child. JAAA offers amazing flexibility for all staff members, not just those that have children/families."

Maggie Steiner-McMurphy, options counselor, is grateful that she did not miss special moments with her daughter Katherine (nicknamed Rin). Among the pros of bringing her baby to work, Maggie cites that her daughter is "more sociable because she had so many different interactions with coworkers. Her transition to daycare wasn't a hard one because she was already used to so many different people."

She lists "snuggles" as both a pro and con, saying that her baby "made snuggling much more appealing than data entry." With regard to Rin's impact on her productivity, Maggie feels it was a wash. "I think I actually struggled more after she was gone (for a while) because I was readjusting to my schedule at work without the baby. Rin was pretty good, so when she napped I tried to work diligently... She was pretty content on her mat also... it was just those darn snuggles I HAD to get in!"

Maggie echoes the sentiments of the other JAAA working mothers with regard to the flexibility the agency offers: "The flexibility at JAAA in general is the best perk of working here. Rin still comes in for visits when her dad has to run to an appointment or what

not and you would think she owns the place the way she runs around. She obviously hasn't forgotten her time at JAAA. I think it is a great practice; not only did I take the skills I learned from the mothers in my family, I took the skills I learned from the mothers at JAAA and implemented them in bringing up Rin. It takes a village and the JAAA village is an excellent one to raise a child in!"

It is not easy to be a working mother, but JAAA's policy of allowing babies to come to work until they are four months old helps the mothers as well as their babies. At a time when other agencies are having difficulty retaining employees, JAAA employees tend to stay put. The "bring your baby to work" policy is only one of many reasons.



Chris Merriweather, JAAA Volunteer and SHICK Coordinator, is proud of the work done by SHICK volunteers.

JAAA's SHICK volunteers saved seniors over \$1 million on Medicare Part D costs

This year, 115 additional customers took advantage of our SHICK volunteers' free service which helped them choose Medicare Part D Prescription Drug plans. Six community volunteers and two student interns contributed over 150 hours and served 2,076 seniors during the Open Enrollment period which ended December 7.

The savings were much more efficiently tracked this year and, for the 857 for whom we had previous information, we saved \$1,062,805.03 or an average of \$1,124.14 per person. That savings is represented by the plan premium and out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs and, in some cases, certain injections such as the Shingles vaccine.

That is an uptick from the 1,961 seniors served last year and a huge increase in savings realized which was \$313,544.41 in 2014 (an average of \$569.05 per person for

those we were able to track). Each year, the number of seniors taking advantage of this free service is expected to grow.

Chris Merriweather, JAAA Volunteer and SHICK Coordinator, was astounded when "we broke \$1 million saved on Saturday, December 5th, and then added another \$62,805.00 saved on Monday, December 7th."

He was thrilled with the number of volunteers, the hours they donated and especially for the money they saved seniors. He states, "I couldn't be more proud of the work we all did this year and to have so many volunteer their time to help was humbling, especially considering volunteers contributed over 150-plus hours of their time this year during Open Enrollment. We hope to continue helping and providing accurate, impartial information to Kansas Medicare beneficiaries ... with the added benefit of saving them as much money as possible!"



JAAA gets around! Look for us!

Need free help filing your income taxes? AARP will be at JAAA on Mondays and Tuesdays from 1/1/16 through end of tax season from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. First come first served; targeting elderly.

Medicare Mondays, first Monday of each month, Topeka/Shawnee County Public Library, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

New to Medicare meeting, Topeka/Shawnee County Library: Thursday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Grey Wolves in Meriden, Meriden United Methodist Church, third Thursday of each month, 11:00 a.m.

CHAMPSS Orientation Sessions

Lawrence: Lawrence Public Library, first Monday of each month (if a holiday, then the following Tuesday) at 2:00 p.m.

Upcoming dates: February 1, March 7 and April 4

Baldwin City: Baldwin City Public Library, quarterly unless demand is greater than anticipated, 2:00 p.m.

Upcoming date: February 9

Shawnee County, first Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. Shawnee residents must call JAAA receptionist to register for an orientation.

Upcoming dates: November 4 and December 2 at Topeka Hy-Vee; January 6 and February 3 at JAAA.

You may contact us at
235-1367 (Topeka); 1-800-798-1366 (outside Topeka)

Jim and Clenece Hills have a home for life

By Marsha Henry Goff

Sometimes you just get lucky. For Jim and Clenece Hills, luck came in June 2001 when Clenece told her stylist during a haircut that she and her husband were looking for a new home. They loved the house where they lived, but realized it could not be adapted to become their lifetime home. "You should buy my mom's home," said the stylist.

"If she wants to sell it, we need to see it," replied Clenece, "because we're getting ready to do something." The stylist immediately called her mother. "That was 1:00 in the afternoon, we saw the house at 4:00 p.m. and Jim gave her a check. I hadn't even seen the basement."

Jim immediately made plans to turn their new rural ranch house into a home where they could live forever. The previous owner had done work — e.g., electrical redundancy — that made Jim's

job a little easier. The only way they could have stayed in their city home, Jim explains, would have been to put in an elevator which was impractical. He admits that he loves the rural atmosphere where they live because, among other attractions, "It is nice to be able to hear the coyotes." He likes seeing the sunsets and both he and Clenece appreciate the tranquility of their location. Jim remarks how noisy it seems when he drives into town.

"When we bought the house," Clenece says, "we knew we were not going to move again. That was our intention and we have really lived in it that way. That's why, of the three bedrooms on this [main] floor, we took two of them so we each have an office. Guests have to stay downstairs, which is not an imposition to them and they have more privacy."

The first changes Jim made to adapt their home to senior living were intuitive. "They were things



Clenece does not have to reach far back in a dark buffet to find dishes. She merely rolls out a drawer.

that we didn't have at the other house," he says "and were determined to have here."

"He also has a short wife," chimes in Clenece. Indeed, many

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The gently rising sidewalk makes entering and exiting the house safe and easy.



Grab bars and railings allow safe passage to the sunken family room from both kitchen and hallway.



Jim Hills demonstrates the ease of accessing canned goods in the pantry with pullout shelves.

Home for life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE SIX

of Jim's improvements take his wife's short stature into consideration. After he made a number of improvements, he learned about Universal Design (www.universaldesign.com) and has incorporated much of what he found there into their home. According to the website, "Universal Design makes things *safer, easier* and *more convenient* for everyone. Universal Design involves designing products and spaces so that they can be used by the widest range of people possible."

Jim constructed a safe and appealing entrance to their front door. A gently curving ramped concrete sidewalk with a custom-made decorative steel railing rises from the drive to a door without a threshold. He provided access without steps through each exterior door to the deck. All steps, including those to the sunken family room, have double rails. The stairs to the yard from the deck has rails and lights and each changing level of the deck has grab bars. Attractive wood grab bars are located by each high-rise toilet. A zero line shower features grab bars, a temperature-control on the shower to avoid scalding and no shower curtain to be caught

in. "Grabbers" to pick up items on the floor are handy throughout the house.

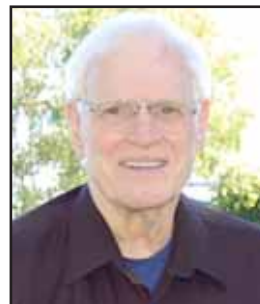
Lighting is an important safety feature and includes ground-fault outlets and switches everywhere. All light bulbs are being changed to lifetime LEDs so changing bulbs will not be necessary. Light switches are on each side of the bed. Lights are installed in all closets. Motion lights illuminate the basement stairway. Exterior motion detector lights welcome guests and scare away predators. Lighting graces both sides of the entrance bridges to the driveway and electric eye exterior lights turn on automatically at night.

Phones are found throughout the house: on both sides of the bed, master bathroom, kitchen, family room, two offices, garage, mudroom and basement. Other convenient

items are an off switch for garage doors so that random remotes cannot open them, an automatic thermostat and a flag on their roadside mailbox so they know if mail is in the box. One of the couples' favorite features is the drawers in the pantry, kitchen cupboards and buffet that replace shelves.

Doors have been widened in the event wheelchairs are needed and carpet has gradually been replaced with hard surface floors. Lastly, Jim built an apartment in the basement so that someone can live-in and take care of the couple when they need it.

Many of the things Jim has done to make their home more safe and convenient can be replicated by homeowners who wish to stay in their homes. With a little effort and expense anyone can have a home for life.



In Memory of Tom Ryan

Jayhawk Area on Aging lost a good friend when Tom Ryan died in November. He was a long-time volunteer with service on our Board of Directors. He also served multiple terms as both Chair and Treasurer of our organization.

Tom is the main reason we have our beautiful building. It was his vision and hard work that enabled us to purchase and renovate it for the benefit of the seniors and their families whom we serve.

At his memorial, it was correctly stated that Tom did not understand the word NO. If he believed strongly in something, he kept pushing until he made it a reality. Wherever we look, we see his handiwork ... from signage on our building to the flag pole in front.

Rest in peace, Tom. We will always miss you.

Life after JAAA

By Marsha Henry Goff

When Marsha Ridinger, Dorothy Devlin and Mary Barker retired from JAAA, the agency lost a collective 63 years of experience. While their co-workers were sad to see them leave, they are happy to realize how well — and how differently — the three ladies have adjusted to life after JAAA.

Marsha Ridinger served JAAA for 34 years, most recently as Older Americans Act (OAA) Pro-



Playing pickleball is one of Mary Barker's fun "firsts."

gram Manager, but she previously oversaw JAAA's fiscal and nutrition departments. She says she misses most "the socialization I had with my co-workers." After selling their home at Lake Wabaunsee several years ago, she and her husband, Bill, moved to Eskridge. She says that there is not a lot of opportunity for socialization in a small town, except for clubs, and — since she was always busy with work and her children's activities — she never had the time or inclination to join clubs.

She still does not, nor has she had time to work in her garden and yard which was one of her stated goals before she retired. Why? Because she's busy working in other people's yards, assisting in Bill's yard care business where he has contracts mowing at the lake and taking care of a cemetery. Outdoor life agrees with her because one of her former co-workers, who recently saw her, said, "She looks wonderful. She is tanned and has lost weight."

Marsha solved her lack of socialization problem by becoming a substitute teller at a local bank where she enjoys meeting and interacting with people. Retirement also gives her more time to spend with her two daughters and grandchildren, at least when she is home.

Marsha and Bill travel throughout the US on a touring motorcycle and in their motorhome. However, as snowbirds this winter, they rented a "tiny home" in Texas, returning to Eskridge to spend Christmas with their family. Though their tiny home away from home has only 500 square feet of living space, she says she is grateful that the home's sleeping quarters are not in a loft.



Marsha Ridinger poses with husband Bill outside their rented "tiny home" in Texas.

No ladders for Marsha!

Dorothy Devlin, who retired from her case worker position in 2014, learned that retirement is just another word for working without pay. An avid volunteer, Dorothy serves as a docent at KU's Spencer Art Museum where she leads tours for a number of school and community groups. She especially enjoys leading tours for English as a Second Language classes and freshman football teams.

Serving as an usher at Lied Center allows her to stay for performances after handing out programs. She also volunteers with Friends of the Library at Lawrence Public Library, helping with book sales and scanning non-fiction books for potential value. She collects Toys for Tots with a service group and still finds time to play bridge three or four times a week. She has been playing bridge since 1988 with one group of women with whom she attended

graduate school.

Dorothy likes to keep busy and was ambivalent about retiring. She loved her work and the people she helped while at JAAA. Her first retirement from her position as executive director of Lawrence Presbyterian Manor did not take and she described coming to work at JAAA in 2002 as "a happy thing to do."

She and her husband, Michael, have two daughters and an 8-year-old granddaughter, Abby, who live in Lawrence and a son in Minnesota. Michael admits he spends a lot of time "trying to keep track of her," so catching up with someone as busy as Dorothy can be difficult. Fortunately, a serendipitous meeting at a CHAMPSS orientation in Baldwin City where she was volunteering allowed her to be interviewed and photographed. Her physical appearance, cheerful demeanor and energy level belie her age. Dorothy does

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Life after JAAA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE EIGHT

not look old enough to retire once, let alone twice!

Mary Barker confesses that she enjoys “sleeping in” and “catching up on my reading” since her retirement last July concluded a 17-year career as a JAAA case manager. But do not let her confession fool you. She is a very active lady who is marking off some fun “firsts” in life. She cites attending a Washburn basketball game, happily stating that she “had never gone to a college game before.” She also is an enthusiastic new competitor in the sport of pickleball, playing twice a week at Hughes Park. And she walks two miles daily.

Since retiring, Mary held two part-time jobs cleaning apartments for an older couple and their neighbors. She is accustomed, both by training and nature, to see to the needs of others. While working at JAAA, she spent two hours

after work each day, as well as on Saturdays and Sundays, caring for an elderly gentleman. “I walked his dog, fixed his dinner and got him to bed.”

At JAAA, Mary describes herself as fulfilling the position of the “social person.” She organized monthly birthday parties, saw that sympathy and get well cards and flowers were sent and initiated the “Secret Santa” program. Her co-workers expressed their appreciation by showering her with her favorite things — Coke and chocolate — when she retired. “There were 400 cans of coke in my cubicle!”

Mary is shredding documents and clearing out unwanted possessions in preparation for the eventual sale of her condo and move to Wichita to be near her sons, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren, 5-year-old Hazel and 3-year-old Lincoln. Family is important to her; she lost her parents at a very young age and was raised by her sister, Ruth, an RN who willingly accepted responsibility for 5-year-



Dorothy Devlin is photographed while volunteering at a CHAMPSS orientation in Baldwin City.

old Mary.

Marsha Ridinger, Dorothy Devlin and Mary Barker are proving — in ways as different as they are — that life after JAAA can be as rewarding as

when they were working there and helping seniors live independent lives. We wish them good health and happiness wherever their future life’s journeys take them.

JAAA offers tai chi classes for the benefit of seniors and others

By Marsha Henry Goff

If your New Year’s resolution is to get in shape by improving your balance, increasing muscle strength and becoming more flexible, it is not too late to accomplish that goal by enrolling in Mae Evans Lovell’s tai chi classes at Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging. Tai chi may also be for you if you would like to ease arthritis pain and relax your mind and body.

Mae teaches six classes a week for JAAA, four at the JAAA building at 2910 SW Topeka Boulevard and two at the United Methodist Church in East Topeka. She also teaches classes at Brewster Place and McCrite Retirement Community. Classes at JAAA are conducted on an ongoing basis and new

students are welcome anytime. Thursday’s 10:30 a.m. class is for beginners. There is no charge for classes, but a suggested donation of \$3 per class is appreciated.

Several of Mae’s students have been attending her classes at JAAA for six years. Among them are Harriet Nicholson and Margery McClacherty. Harriet and Margery are always positioned near one another and Harriet, who has a tall and athletic build, consistently dresses in bright clothing. She does that because Margery, who is legally blind, patterns her moves after Harriet’s because she cannot see well enough to follow Mae’s movements.

Harriet remarks that she just happened to wear a bright yellow shirt

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JAAA offers a large, comfortable space for tai chi lessons.

Tai chi

CONTINUED FROM PAGE NINE

one day and Margery said, "My, I can sure see that!" Since that time, Harriet accommodates her friend by wearing clothing that stands out, particularly bright yellow and neon green. She notes that members of the class routinely help each other and cites one classmate who — if someone near her tires and sits down to do the exercises — also sits down. "There are so many friendly, caring people in the class," Harriet says, "and so much energy."

Harriet has taken tai chi classes for many years with two very good instructors, Peggy Wheeler and Eleanor Liu, beginning lessons first at the Y when her husband was working out. Now she says, "I can't imagine taking the class without Mae. Her knowledge is amazing; she keeps updated and explains what the movements do."

Margery, a tai-chi student for eight years, is sweet-faced and cheerfully outgoing in spite of her visual limitations. Harriet shared that her friend routinely picks up her neighbors' newspapers from their yards and delivers them to their doorsteps. Last year while delivering papers, Margery slipped on a small patch of black ice and broke her ankle. "She never complained about it and recovered really well," says Harriet. Margery credits her quick recovery, which surprised therapists, to the tai chi exercises she had done for years.

Once an avid reader, Margery now listens to talking books which are mailed to her from Emporia State. She is a Ring-a-Day volunteer, calling eight shut-ins each morning to visit with them. "My husband, Jim, was a 54-year diabetic and he had a one hour dialysis treatment four times a day which confined him at home. To have something to do, he began

calling for Ring-a-Day and that is how it all started. I continued the calls after his death."

Holly Devlin waited to take tai chi until she retired from her position as a medical technologist in the laboratory at St. Francis Hospital because she wanted to participate in a day time class. She says she "wanted to try tai chi for quite a while because I had heard it was a form of exercise that was easy on the joints. I had taken yoga in the past and did not like that very much. I enjoy the classes and the people in the class. Mae is also a wonderful teacher. Tai chi is a slowly moving form of exercise and a way of relaxation. It is also a good way to improve your balance. By performing the tai chi moves, it just gives you a good feeling about oneself."

The JAAA tai chi classes, open to both women and men, can easily accommodate more students because of the size of the carpeted lower-level room, accessible by elevator, where the classes are held. Mae, a registered nurse, is a certified Tai Chi for Health Instructor and Senior Trainer. She is also a Taiji Quan Moving for Better Balance Certified instructor and is certified to teach Tai Chi for Arthritis, Tai Chi for Diabetes and Tai Chi for Osteoporosis.

Mae first became acquainted with and personally experienced the many health benefits of tai chi while living in China part-time for six years. She has been a certified instructor for eight years and says, "As a Registered Nurse it has become my passion to share this ancient exercise for which the benefits are now scientifically evidence based."

Tai chi's ability to relieve pain stems from several factors: movement, stretching, deep abdominal breathing, the meditative state and relaxation. Mae notes experiencing those benefits herself: "After having surgery for breast cancer last spring, my appreciation for the power of tai chi increased even more. Because of



Mae Evans Lovell's face radiates serenity as she leads her class in tai chi movements.

side effects, I was not able to tolerate the pain medication. With the gentle movements and breathing methods of tai chi, the pain I experienced was minimal. In addition, tai chi triggers the relaxation response which further decreases pain and promotes healing. Because the physical movements of tai chi are done slowly and mindfully, it is less likely to cause trauma while one is recuperating from illness or surgery. It requires no equipment

and can be done seated, standing or even lying down by persons of any age or fitness level."

The type of tai chi taught by Mae differs from martial arts tai chi. She explains, "The programs I teach are adapted forms of tai chi developed by physicians and scientifically researched based. This makes them safe and easier to learn for any age or fitness level."

Join Harriet, Margery, Holly and their classmates and give Mae's tai chi class a try.

Save Saturday, May 21 for Elvis in Viva Las Vegas

Bob Lockwood is excited about being selected for a fourth year to do his Elvis performance with the 1950's Secrets Band. Last year's theme was Elvis in Blue Hawaii; this year's theme, expected to be equally popular, is Elvis in Viva Las Vegas.

Bob and the band did not know what to expect the first year they performed for the event. Prior to 2013, Topeka's Kings of Swing band played several years for our fundraiser and did a great job. In 2013, when we decided to shake things up with Elvis, our fundraiser conflicted with every graduation in the vicinity and yet we still had a good crowd. Word of mouth spread and the group's subsequent performances have attracted appreciative audiences of all ages who love Elvis and his songs. Many people dance while others watch and listen.

The band consists of two of Bob's sons: Dr. Park Lockwood, Lawrence, (Washburn University professor) and Bobby Lockwood, Kansas City, KS, (teacher and coach); Jeff Nelson, Lawrence, (Douglas County Deputy Sheriff); Ken Burke, Shawnee, (financial advisor); Lt. Col. Lanny Snodgrass, MD, Seattle, WA, (military physician and Washington University professor); and Debbie Husted, Lawrence, (professional singer). The band plays music of all tempos and Dr. Snodgrass plays beautiful piano music while attendees are dining.

Bob says that he is "so honored to have been selected for the fourth straight year as the theme band for the JAAA annual fund raiser dinner/dance. The Elvis popularity and the music from the '50s, '60s, and '70s has been a hit for all audiences, and the JAAA experience has been so fun and emotionally rewarding. I am personally thank-

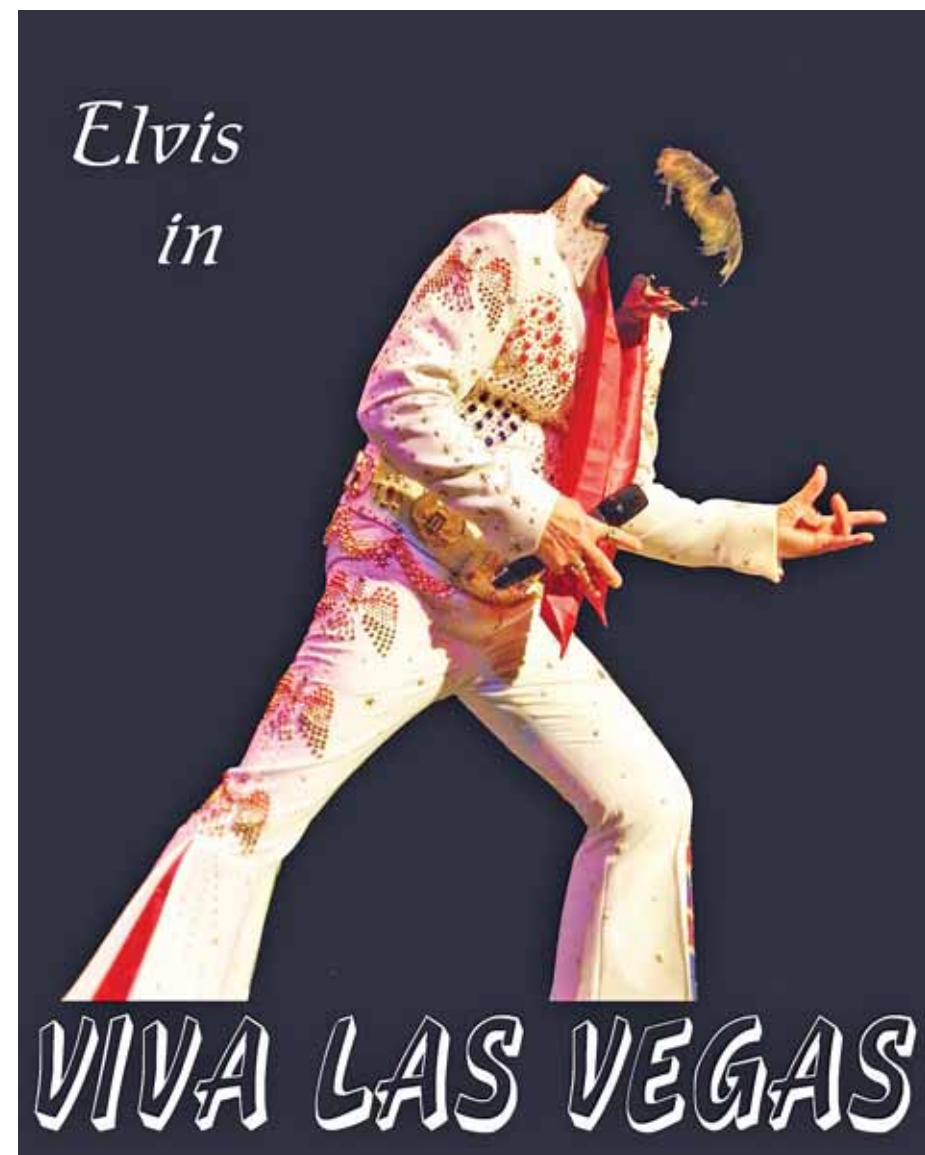
ful for each opportunity to pay tribute to the music and times of Elvis. JAAA is a pillar in the tri-county area for service to our seniors and its Guardian Angel Fund is a wonderful cause. The band and I are excited for the JAAA dinner/dance May 21, 2016."

Another attraction at our fundraiser is the delicious food and beverages served by Aboud's Catering. Aboud's servers and bartenders are friendly and helpful. Brad and Deborah Aboud have been among Guardian Angel Fund's strongest supporters because they understand how important the fund is to seniors who have no other place to turn when calamity strikes.

JAAA's "There's No Place Like Home" Committee is a small group of women who work very hard to raise money for JAAA's Guardian Angel Fund. The committee consists of Shirley Biller, Kathy Green, Jocelyn Lyons, Carol Sook, Beverly Thompson, Lori Yocum and is chaired by Marsha Henry Goff. Kathy is a wonderful new addition to the committee, but she has been working behind the scenes for TNPLH for several years.

We have Kathy to thank for a number of our special silent auction items over the years, ranging from a snow blower to a football signed by K-State Coach Bill Snyder and basketballs signed by KU Coach Bill Self and K-State Coach Bruce Weber. This year she has already secured a leaf blower and a Kitchen Aide mixer for the auction and she is busy soliciting other donations.

The silent auction has become a big attraction at the event and April Maddox, Director of Case Management, has been successful in securing coveted items including tickets to Kansas City Royals, colle-



Bob Lockwood performs as Elvis at the Lied Center in Lawrence.

giate and many other sports games, KC Chiefs items, tickets to theater and musical events, artwork, auto services, massage and spa appointments and far too many other items to name. Everyone who buys a ticket gets a free chance on the

drawings for elegant themed baskets donated by our supporters.

So mark May 21 on your calendars and meet us at Topeka's Great Overland Station to let Elvis treat you to a fun night . . . Las Vegas style.

Call Kevin at (785) 841-9417 to place your display ad in the Spring 2016 issue of Amazing Aging! The deadline is April 15.

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