

# 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

SPRING 2018



## *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



## MUMC Volunteers at Work

Nancy Lord and Jan Shunk dish up some food (see page 3)

# A Message from Susan Harris, JAAA Executive Director

Older Americans Month is celebrated every May as a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country. When Older Americans Month was established in 1963 by President Kennedy, there were 17 million living Americans over the age of 65, about a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. The number of people age 65 and older has increased steadily since the 1960s, and is projected to double from 46 million today to more than 98 million by 2060.

The poverty rate for Americans ages 65 and older has dropped sharply during the past

50 years, from nearly 30 percent in 1966 to 10 percent today. In the early 1960s, the poverty rate among older adults was much higher than that of children and working-age adults. But the expansion of Social Security, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, contributed to a rapid decrease in poverty among older adults. As Social Security expenditures increased, the poverty rate among older adults declined, and has remained at relatively low levels for more than three decades. In 2014, the poverty rate among older adults was 10 percent.

For 55 years, Older Americans Month has been observed to recognize older Americans and



**Susan Harris**

their contributions to our communities. Led by the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Aging, every May offers opportunity to hear from, support, and celebrate our nation's elders. This year's Older Americans Month theme, "Engage at Every Age," emphasizes the importance of being active and involved, no matter where or when you are in life. You are never too old (or too young) to participate in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotion well-being.

It is becoming more apparent

that remaining socially engaged can improve the quality of life for older adults. Across the country, older Americans — a rapidly growing population — are taking part in activities that promote wellness and social connection. They are sharing their wisdom and experience with future generations, and they are giving back to enrich their communities. They're working and volunteering, mentoring and learning, leading and engaging.

Please join Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging as we celebrate Older Americans Month this May.

## In this issue

In a follow-up to the Winter issue of *Amazing Aging*, two stories of which focused on seniors' declining standard of living and their worries about rising real estate property taxes, a story in this issue — "Why are our elected officials leaving seniors behind?" — shares some of the comments I received from seniors concerned about their future years which they fear may be anything but golden.

You will also find articles about interesting people including eight generations of the Leary family who have been the owners/occupants of the same house for 148 years, and Grace Richele, a case manager who is retiring after 21 years serving clients of JAAA. Grace is a remarkable woman who turned what others might regard as a mid-life tragedy into a career she absolutely loved.

The lead story is about the members of the Meriden United Methodist Church who continually work to improve the lives of Jefferson County residents through Gray Wolves Empowerment Program, God's Storehouse food pantry, BackSnacks in conjunction with Harvester's and Jeff West Elementary School, exercise programs and so many other endeavors designed to help people of all ages.

The ads also deserve reading because they give you notice of upcoming events and even offer you the opportunity to volunteer while learning new skills.

*Amazing Aging* exists for you. If you have concerns or issues you would like to know more about, please contact me via JAAA.

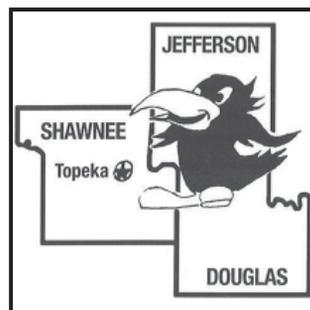
Marsha Henry Goff,  
Editor, *Amazing Aging*

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Marsha Henry Goff, editor



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# Meriden United Methodist Church: Nourishing the bodies, minds and souls of Jefferson County residents

By Marsha Henry Goff

Small town residents look after their own. That is never more evident than in Meriden, population hovering around 900. Of that number, 21.6 percent are age 65 or older, nearly 8 percent of whom are considered to be living in poverty. Unlike larger cities that have multiple programs to assist residents, Meriden's churches, service groups, clubs and individuals band together to see to the needs of their neighbors.

In 2015, Reverend Doctor Richard Randolph, then pastor of Meriden United Methodist Church (MUMC), learned about a grant from United Methodist Church's General Board of Discipleship that, if accepted, might finance a monthly meal program for Jefferson County seniors. He persuaded Karolyn Conaway, at the time chair of the church's outreach committee, to co-sign the grant. Happily, the grant was approved and the church was awarded \$2,500 for implementation of the Gray Wolves Empowerment Program.

The first "Howling," as it was then called, took place on February 17, 2015, with the theme of "Mardi Gras." The program featured a luncheon with gumbo, a bingo game and a program on overcoming the winter blahs. The second Howling in March celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a luncheon of corned beef and cabbage and shamrock cookies.

When the grant expired after

two years, MUMC approached other churches and local organizations about funding the program so it could continue. Working in concert with Meriden Community Church, on the third Tuesday of each month, a meal and program is held at MUMC. Money for the meals is donated by the two churches, Kappa Kappa Sorority and American Legion. "One month, Community Church prepares and serves the food," Conaway explains, "the next month, we do."

Although the name of Howling to describe the monthly meetings did not stick, the themed luncheons continue today. Camille Sutton, a retired United Methodist minister, was a part of the committee when Gray Wolves was formed. She is in charge of preparing the meals and was cited by Karolyn Conaway as deserving of credit "because she does so much work."

Nancy Lord, the energetic and upbeat secretary of the committee, decides on each month's theme, provides the decorations — including theme-inspired placemats she makes for each meal — and speaks to the group about the significance of the theme. After the meal, attendees are treated to an informational speaker or entertainment (think a visit from Santa Claus at Christmas).

Firefighters have presented a program in which they offered to install free smoke detectors for any Jefferson resident who



Nancy Lord and Camille Sutton ensure that attendees at the Gray Wolves monthly luncheon have tasty food and a good time. Nancy holds their mascot dubbed Howler.

calls to request it. A representative of Jayhawk Area on Agency attends each monthly meeting, on occasion JAAA provides programs of interest to seniors. Each October, JAAA volunteers bring computers and help attendees choose which Medicare Part D

insurance best fits their needs.

Paster Ken Parker mentions that the church also assists with Harvester's BackSnack Program that provides weekend meals for students at Jeff West Elementary. Harvester's delivers the back-

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# When life handed Grace Reichle a lemon, she made lemonade with a 21 year career at JAAA

By Marsha Henry Goff

When Grace Reichle retires on May 31 after 21 years as a case manager with Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, she knows she will need something to do. She has decided to work as a volunteer in JAAA's CHAMPSS meal program. She also plans to travel, something she has done throughout her career with JAAA. She has visited Hawaii and many other states, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Nova Scotia and other exotic destinations. A cruise to Alaska is on her list of places she would like to visit.

Her path to a career at JAAA was unusual. What first appeared a calamity served as a catalyst for attaining her degree. After working for 20 years as one of the secretaries for analyst programmers at Blue Cross/Blue Shield, she was abruptly fired just a few short weeks after becoming a foster mother to a seven-year-old girl. The timing could not have been worse. "I wanted to give her a great Christmas, which I did, with lots of presents and a Christmas tree. Then, in January, I was fired at the age of 41. For six months I walked around the house saying 'What am I going to do?'"

Grace is pleased that she always found a way to support herself and her daughter. She worked eight months at HyperMart, but admits that walking eight hours on cement floors caused her to seek other employment. She worked two

years as a secretary at Southwest Christian Church.

As devastating as her firing was, in retrospect she says, "It was the best thing that ever happened to me because I got to go back to college." The decision to enroll in college and attain a degree in social work was not an easy one. In arguing pros and cons, she told one of her friends, "But I'll be 50 when I get my degree."

Her friend replied, "You'll be 50 with or without a degree."

During the six years it took her to graduate, she paid her living expenses by doing inventory for two Rex's Tire stores and utilized student loans to pay for her education. "I got up early in the morning at 3 or 4 o'clock and did my school work and I'd get B.J. off to school and then, after I took her to school, I did inventory at one store, then I'd go to class, then I'd go back and do inventory at the other store. I had a great boss who allowed me flexible hours."

Grace was awarded her degree in social work from Washburn University at an older age than most students. "I was almost 50 when I got my degree, 44 when I started college." Grace confides that she wanted to be a teacher, but aptitude tests showed she was not especially suited for that job. However, the fact that she loved helping people eventually led her to social work. She feels she was guided to that vocation by the Lord. "It had to be. I was 50 when I got my job at JAAA. Who gets a job at 50?"



Grace Richele, case manager, retires in May after 21 years with JAAA.

Looking back on her career at JAAA, Grace says she is leaving a job she loves working with people she loves, her clients and her co-workers. "I have had great co-workers," she says with satisfaction. Social workers are often advised to guard their hearts from becoming too close with the people they serve. But Grace admits to becoming close to many over the years. "You see them often. You hear their life stories. Many of them, both men and women, are veterans. I became close to a 95-year-old woman. Every time I would call, she'd say, 'Grace, how are you doing?' She's gone now and is better off, but I miss her."

She also has had challenges with difficult clients. "One man was ugly with everyone, including me. Then one day he said, 'We're getting along better, aren't

we?' and, from then on, he was nice to me. We got along."

As a young woman, Grace bought a home in Green Acres. She kept that home for 34 years until she sold it to enter into an interesting arrangement with her sister and brother, each of whom sold their homes. The three compatible siblings then purchased a large home together.

When each lived alone, she explains, "We used to have three Cox Cable bills, three electric bills and three of this and that, and we don't do that

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Please recycle this copy of *Amazing Aging!* when you are through with it.

# Ruth Moriarty Henry — aka my Grams — made it into Chicken Soup

By Marsha Henry Goff

I have always thought that I had the most amazing family, all of whom have provided me with great copy over the years. *Chicken Soup for the Soul* apparently agrees with me because a story about my paternal grandmother appears in *Chicken Soup's* newly-released *My Crazy Family: 101 Stories about the Wacky, Lovable People in Our Lives*.

Grams — as were my other family elders — was a wonderful role model by showing me how to grow older without noticing I was doing it. In her eighties, she climbed trees, roofed houses and kept a baseball bat handy in the event a burglar invaded her home. I pity any burglar who tried to take on Grams. Though no bigger than a minute, she was tough as nails. Best of all, as a nurse trained in a Victorian hospital, she would have tended his injuries afterward.

I wrote this about Grams in a long-ago *Jest for Grins* column: The first time I heard the phrase “old age ain’t for sissies,” I thought of my Grandma Ruth celebrating a birthday by flexing her 80-year-old, rock-hard biceps sculpted by years of sorting metal in the

small-town junkyard she managed by herself after Grandpa’s death. Grams, a first generation Irish-American, standing 4’11” and weighing in at 85 pounds, was plenty tough!

At age 87, Grams climbed a tree to pick pears. She took the precaution of having her 90-year-old sister-in-law take position under the tree as a spotter. Suddenly, Grams plummeted 15 feet, landing with a loud *WHUMP* at Aunt May’s feet. When Aunt May couldn’t revive Grams, she concluded the worst and went into the house to call the mortuary. She was talking to the funeral director when Grams, bruised but unbroken, walked in the back door.

As soon as we learned of the accident, we drove 90 miles to Grams’ house and took her to a doctor. When the doctor advised her not to climb any more trees, Grams declared emphatically, “I certainly won’t be climbing any more PEAR trees!”

But my favorite recollection of my young-at-heart Grams is of a visit to a park where we took the kids to play. I can still see her barreling down the high slide, arms up in the air, a big smile on her face. She shot right off the end of the slide and landed in a pile of sand.



Ruth Moriarty Henry



Grams swings a sparkler. Her comment upon seeing the photo was “I look sort of pregnant.”

I watched as she struggled to her feet, dusted herself off, and headed for the ladder of the slide to “go again!”

That’s the best lesson I learned from Grams: Keep growing older but never grow old.

## Reichle

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anymore. I pay \$800 which is my third share of the mortgage. My sister does all of the cleaning, she does all of the grocery shopping, cooking, anything that needs to be done, she does it. I don’t have to touch a thing. My brother and I pay her \$400 a

month to do this.”

After her retirement party on June 1 — which also happens to be payday — Grace is ready to have a rich retirement: helping people she loves while volunteering with people she loves, living with people she loves, spending time with her three grandchildren and traveling. It doesn’t get much better than that.

snacks to MUMC which stores them until they are delivered to the school on Fridays by Sharon and Jerry Bragg, Karolyn and Jim Conaway, Joyce and Bruce Fleeker and Derek and Kristina Orndorff, who take their turns delivering in alphabetical order.

While Gray Wolves has been quite successful in its three years of existence, the church's involvement in God's Storehouse, a food pantry, goes back to 1991 when it opened with the efforts



**Pastor Ken Parker**

of LaWanda and Woody Woods and other members of the community. Current chair of the God's Storehouse Board is Joanie Clelland and sponsors include churches, service clubs, and school, community and veterans' organizations.

God's Storehouse is housed in a building that was once a school annex, donated by USD 340. The building was moved to its current site at West Main Street and remodeled for pantry use primarily by the Knights of Columbus from St. Aloy-

sius Parish. God's Storehouse is supported by area volunteers — many from MUMC — who manage the food bank which opens each Saturday morning from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 or 10:00 a.m., depending on the number of Jefferson County residents served, which ranges from 10 to 90 families. In January, God's Storehouse served 79 families, representing 150 people, 80 of whom were children.

The pantry is stocked by donations from Harvester's, area organizations and individuals. Families who come to God's Storehouse leave with such items as canned food

and cooking and baking staples, meat and fresh fruit, toilet tissue, soap, cookies, Jello or pudding, even baby food and diapers — whatever is in stock on any given Saturday. Schools in Meriden have engaged in competitions with both Perry and Royal Valley schools to see who could collect the most food for their respective food pantries. Karolyn Conaway remembers one trophy: a paper plate, cup and plastic silverware, all sprayed silver.

Each Christmas, under the



**Susan Harris, JAAA Executive Director**, attended Gray Wolves luncheons as ADRC Supervisor. In this 2016 photo, she poses with Santa at the Christmas luncheon.

leadership of Nancy Boden, God's Storehouse accepts applications from families and individuals who wish to be

adopted. In December, big red and yellow sacks full of presents for the adoptees are brought

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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](mailto:mhgink@netscape.net) or write to her in care of JAAA, 2910 SW Topeka Boulevard, Topeka, KS 66611.



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into MUMC's gymnasium. While the colorful bags line the East end of the gym, the other end hosts a huge garage sale of donated items. "We don't take any money," Karolyn says, "items are given to those who need or want them."

Since 2007, senior exercise classes have been held in the church at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. At 5:30 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, working women — many of whom are teachers — exercise at the church. That class is dubbed "Body and Soul." Men are welcome at exercise classes, but do not usually attend.

The church and its members work tirelessly to serve the Jefferson County Community. At community dinners, men are involved and were frying fish outdoors last Good Friday

while other volunteers, including the pastor, bustled around the kitchen preparing the meal's potatoes, vegetables and desserts. A few fortunate individuals were served fried morel mushrooms. Chairing that event — working in the kitchen and keeping an eye on everything — was Jan Shenk.

Pastor Ken Parker acknowledges that the church is dependent on its many volunteers, along with Janette Anguish, his very capable administrative assistant, to maintain its strong involvement in the community. Karolyn Conaway is modest about her work in the church's many outreach programs, citing the efforts of others that merit attention. But Pastor Parker is not reticent about expressing his opinion of her considerable effort on the behalf of others. He says, "Karolyn Conaway has been an active participant in so many of our mission outreach programs and is always willing



Men of MUMC fry fish outdoors for the church's Good Friday fish fry.

to step up and invite and encourage members and friends of the church to be involved too. She has a heart for those who have need, especially the children of our community. God has truly blessed us with her in our church and in our community."

Karolyn would be quick (and correct) to say that she is only one of many church members who volunteer to help MUMC in its efforts to nourish the bodies, minds and souls of the Jefferson County residents they serve.



Sharon Bragg and Karolyn Conaway enjoy their work with Harvester's BackSnack program.



God's Storehouse, Meriden's food pantry, is housed in a former school annex.

# Why are our seniors being left behind?

By Marsha Henry Goff

Two articles in the last *Amazing Aging* — “Property tax relief is needed for Kansas seniors” and “Seniors’ declining standard of living” — prompted many comments . . . and not from those you might think. Retired seniors who spoke to me are those who planned for retirement and thought they had sufficient funds to enjoy a comfortable life after the paychecks stopped.

They were willing for me to tell their stories and were candid in voicing their worries about the future, but — for obvious reasons — asked me to not use their real names. Their stories are true. Their concerns are real. It was a shock to them to learn they had not counted on living expenses — *all* living expenses, not just a few — rising so fast.

Even soon-to-be retirees are worried. Cheryl and her husband built their dream home a dozen years ago. With two incomes, their home was easily affordable when they built it and in the years since, but property taxes have risen so fast that Cheryl is worried they will be taxed out of their home and forced to sell once they are relying on retirement incomes. “We are not going to deplete our 401Ks just to pay taxes,” she says.

Sally, a retired educator with a KPERS pension, has taken a part-time job just so she can travel while she’s still young enough to enjoy it. She acknowledges that she will be able to extend her standard of living in

the near future with some belt-tightening, but worries that with a fixed income, rising prices and an onerous real estate property tax, she will eventually be forced to downsize. Sally hopes legislators will do something to enable seniors to stay in their homes.

Rachel has health challenges that require her to use a wheelchair. Currently she is worried that she cannot find businesses that will accept Medicare to replace or maintain durable medical equipment (e.g., wheelchairs, hospital beds, insulin pumps, oxygen equipment). She spent three hours phoning and searching the Internet and found only one repair entity that accepts Medicare to repair her wheelchair. Three weeks after contacting them, her repair is still not completed.

She notes that costs for food have risen significantly in the last year, as have utility costs and is greatly concerned that Westar is asking for a rate increase that would raise customers’ bills by \$52.6 million annually. She adds, “My prescription drugs costs have doubled due mostly to changes in the Tier. Three years ago, my HOA dues increased \$300 annually.” A home with a home owner’s association is essential to her because she can no longer do yard work nor shovel snow.

Rachel says that recent tax changes are more likely to hurt her than help because, while the standard deduction is increasing, many of her deductions are being phased out. Changes to the medical deduction are particularly concerning to her,



because her costs far exceed 7.5 percent of her gross income. But she admits that, “What worries me most is the rise in property taxes and valuation. Although I downsized into a smaller, less valuable home several years ago, I am now paying about \$400 more in taxes and within the last six months I received notice that the valuation on my property rose \$10,000, making a rise in both property taxes and insurance a certainty.”

She has had to increase withdrawals from her retirement savings to supplement her Social Security and that worries her because she figures that, with careful budgeting, she can maintain her current standard of living — comfortable, but not extravagant — for only five or six years without making substantial sacrifices.

Chris and Louanne, with two Social Security checks, one pension and two IRAs thought they were primed for an enjoyable retirement. But that was 20 years

ago. Their income has remained the same for two decades and IRAs have been tapped, but their not-too-distant future does not look at all golden. Their budget does not allow the traveling that they hoped to do. And, though their home is paid for, they — as do Cheryl and her husband — worry that ever-increasing property taxes will force them out of their home.

Like many seniors, Janice is working part-time, not because she wants to, but because she must. “My Social Security amount stayed the same because the COLA was wiped out by the rise in medical insurance. Gas prices are up, food prices are up. Utilities are going up. The car insurance on my same car went up because my age went up.”

“To live comfortably,” she says, “you just can’t do it! When you’re working hard all your life to make ends meet, you can’t put away the \$200,000 in cash

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# Left behind

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or stocks that retirement homes suggest you need to move into their facilities.”

The economy is presently doing well which is great for those who see their paychecks rising after remaining stagnant for so long. Seniors, however, do not feel the benefit of a rise in their income when a two percent raise in COLA is offset by up to a ten percent raise in insurance as well as increases in utilities, groceries and other retail goods. The income tax reduction helps working families, but it does little for seniors, the majority of whom pay very little, if any, income taxes due to their greatly reduced incomes.

Why are seniors being left behind by their federal, state, county and city elected officials? It is likely not by design, but because those officials simply do not consider the devastating

impact their decisions to raise taxes has on seniors. Many states realize how burdensome property taxes are to seniors and take steps to relieve them of some of that burden.

Kansas is not one of those states and that is creating a new class of poor in our state: retirees who worked hard all their lives to buy their own homes and who prepared for retirement, but didn't count on property taxes rising so quickly and so much. The writer of a recent letter to the *Journal-World* said that Douglas County property taxes have risen 40 percent in the last ten years. Such a rate increase is untenable to seniors whose incomes are static.

Kansas seniors are crying for help with their property taxes. The time for state officials to act is now. And it is also time for seniors (and those who love them) to contact their representatives and urge them to provide seniors with critically-needed property tax relief.



## Help us stop elder abuse by reporting it!

Each year, an estimated 5 million older adults are abused, neglected,

or exploited. Older Americans lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually due to elder financial abuse and exploitation, funds that could be used to pay for basic needs such as housing, food, and medical care. Unfortunately, it occurs in every demographic and can happen to anyone—a family member, a neighbor, even you. It is estimated that only one in five of these crimes are discovered. Let's change that!



## Volunteer with the Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas

Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) is a free program offering Kansans an opportunity to talk with trained, community volunteers and get answers to questions about Medicare and other insurance issues.

More people need help understanding their Medicare every year. More trained volunteers are needed to help. The training is free. Our counselors receive training on Medicare, Medicare Supplement Insurance, Long-Term Care and other health insurance subjects that concern older Kansans.

Call SHICK coordinator Michele Dillon today at 785-235-1367 to learn how you can volunteer! Or email [mdillon@jhawkaaa.org](mailto:mdillon@jhawkaaa.org).



2910 SW Topeka Blvd • Topeka, Kansas 66611

# Communication with a person with Dementia

By Michele Dillon  
JAAA ADRC Supervisor

Good communication skills will help to make caregiving a little less stressful and decrease agitation in your loved one. Here are ten tips:

1. Set a positive mood by your tone of voice and physical touch. Be calm and pleasant. Approach the situation without confrontation or expectation. Your facial expressions and tone of voice will set the tone.

2. Limit noise and distractions as much as possible. Address your loved one by name and maintain eye contact. Depending on how far they are into the disease process you may have to remind them of your name. Use nonverbal cues and touch to keep them focused.

3. Keep it simple — Use simple words and sentences. Don't complicate the issue. Speak slowly and try to keep your voice in low, soothing tones. Repeat request if needed. If you both are getting frustrated, change the subject or leave it alone for a few minutes and then try again. Use names instead of pronouns. Closed ended (yes or no) questions work best. Provide choice but limit it. Example: "Hi Tom, would you like your shower now or this afternoon? Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the brown one?" Hold up both for visual cues.

4. Be patient in waiting on a reply. Look for nonverbal cues and suggest words if needed. We

all know that nonverbal communication says more than verbal.

5. Tasks become more understandable when broken down into steps. Gentle reminders on steps that are forgotten and assistance with things they can no longer do. Try to keep them as independent as possible but be patient and help when needed. This can be the most difficult piece for some people. If going to a doctor's appointment, for example, leave plenty of time before the appointment so you're not rushed and frazzled. Maybe do a road trip or get ice cream before the appointment so everything is calm.



Michele Dillon

6. When your loved one does get agitated, distract and redirect. Suggest having a snack or going for a walk. Put some music on and ask them to dance. Before redirecting, though, it's always good to empathize with the person. You don't want to disregard how they're feeling, but acknowledge it.

7. Don't argue or disagree. If Dad is looking for Mom, who passed ten years ago, start a reminiscing conversation. Something like, "I forgot how you and Mom met, tell me about that" is a good conversation starter. Bringing up that Mom died is just going to upset that person and they will grieve all over again. A comforting touch and reassurance is the best approach.

8. Since I've brought up reminiscing, spend time with your loved one discussing the past. Those with dementia keep their

past memories long after the short term fades. Music they grew up with or past events are a great conversation starter. When the person is in the later stages and can no longer have a conversation, reminiscing is still a good way to visit. Patting or holding their hand or singing their favorite song can still be a comfort. Maybe reading a book from their childhood.

Personality and behavioral changes are common occurrences with this disease. Maintain your sense of humor and be creative, flexible and patient. It's the disease that's causing the behavior change. It's not their fault and they are not mad at you. You can't change the person so try to accommodate the behavior instead of changing it. If they don't want to shower, try a bed bath. Use warm clothes and massages to accomplish the task. If they want to sleep on

the floor, put a mattress there. If they don't want to change outfits, try buying two of the same one. What works today may not work tomorrow

Talk with the doctor about behavior changes. Your loved one might be in pain and can't communicate it. They might have a bladder infection or a virus. If they are having hallucinations, medications might help. All behaviors are a communication of some need they cannot express. Trying to keep them busy and continuing to give them purpose goes a long way in keeping some behaviors, such as wandering and rifling through drawers, at bay.

Join a support group in your area. Jayhawk Area Agency has several. We also offer other programs, as well as informational materials, to assist caregivers in their journey. Call us at 235-1367 or 1-800-798-1366.

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(785) 841-9417 to  
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The deadline is July 15.**



Look for  
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at Topeka's  
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on  
July 18, 2018



*Shawnee, Jefferson & Douglas Counties*

## **JAAA gets around! Look for us!**

### **Caregivers' Support Groups**

**Baldwin Methodist Church**, first Wednesday of each month, 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

**May 2**

**Baldwin does not meet June, July, August**

**Topeka/Shawnee Library**, second Monday of each month, 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**May 14 June 10 July 8**

**JAAA**, third Friday of each month, 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

**May 18 June 15 July 20**

**Medicare Monday**, we'll answer your Medicare questions, Topeka Public Library, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. **May**

**May 7 June 4 July 2**

**Do It Yourself Medicare Part D**, Topeka Public Library, second Wednesday of each month 9:30 a.m.

**May 9 June 13 July 11**

**Grey Wolves in Meriden**, Meriden United Methodist Church, third Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m. for Jefferson County seniors: meal, fellowship, presentation.

**May 15 June 19 July 17**

**Medicare Quarterly Evening**, Topeka Public Library, 6:30 p.m. on **June 14**.

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### **CHAMPSS Orientation Sessions**

**Lawrence**: Lawrence Public Library, first Monday of each month at 2 p.m.

**May 7 June 4 July 2**

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

**May 2 June 6 July 11**

**Jefferson County** residents may enroll in Topeka or Lawrence orientation sessions.

You may contact us at

235-1367 (Topeka); 1-800-798-1366 (outside Topeka)

# Keeping it in the family: The Leary House in Douglas County

By Marsha Henry Goff

It is not unusual, says Julius Leary, for someone driving a car by his beautiful blue Victorian home in the country south of Lawrence, to pull into the driveway and ask if the house is finished. Leary always answers in the negative.

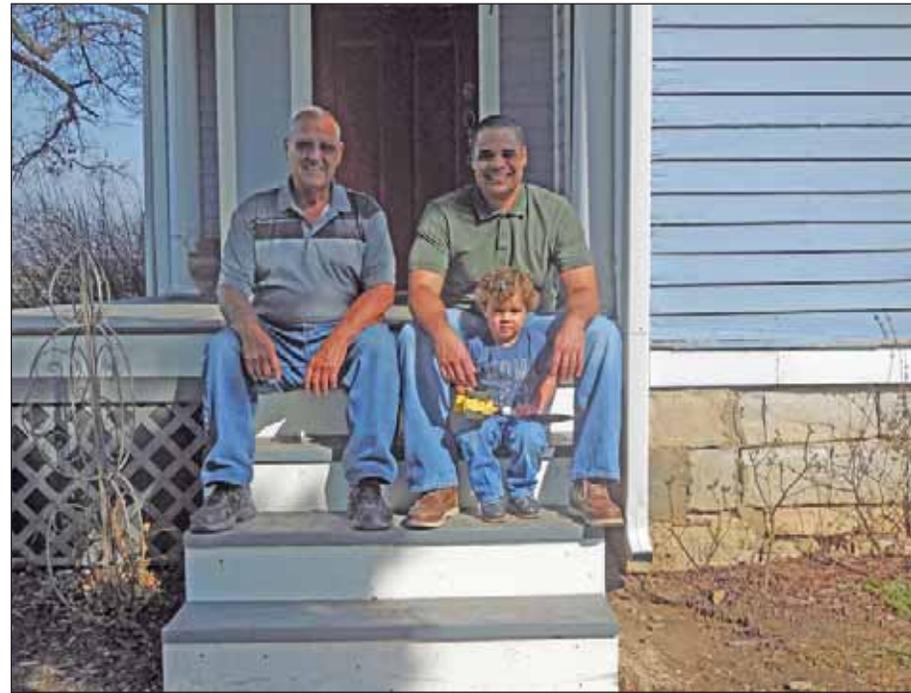
Restoring the house that his Great-great-great-great-great-grandfather built in 1870 for \$4,000 is a labor of love for Julius and his wife Carolyn. Adding to their passion for returning the home to its former beauty is the knowledge that the house has been occupied solely by preceding generations of his family.

His grandfather, Ralph Leary, resided in the house for 32 years

before moving into a home he built on nearby Leary land. Ralph also made improvements to the house and is thrilled that Julius and Carolyn chose to purchase it and continue the Leary occupancy.

Julius and Carolyn have two children — Julius, Jr., two-and-a-half, and Jennifer, three-months-old — who represent the eighth generation of their family connected to the house. Ownership and occupancy stretching back 148 years through eight generations of one family might set a record in Kansas.

You may view additional photos and learn more about the Leary family and their home in the Summer issue of *Lawrence Magazine* which will be published in June.



Ralph (generation five), Julius (generation seven) and Junior (generation eight) — pose on the steps of a house that has been in their family for eight generations.



*Dance like you're almost 104!*

Does dancing keep you young? Norma Green Evans, who will be 104 years young on August 1, 2018, dances with Bev Meredith-Roe to the love ballads sung by Elvis (Bob Lockwood) at the February luncheon of Perry Senior Citizens.

Norma and her late husband loved to dance and she never misses a chance to trip the light fantastic.



Junior Leary with Great-grandfather Ralph and Dad Julius in his bedroom filled with the toys all little boys love.