

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**

Fall 2014



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



KDADS Secretary Kari Bruffett enjoys visiting with Dodge City seniors at the Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging Fall Conference in September 2014. Story on page 3.

A Message from Jocelyn Lyons, JAAA Executive Director

Changes! Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging celebrates a new year each October, welcoming changes and implementing our vision in service delivery for our consumers in Douglas, Jefferson and Shawnee Counties. With each new year, change is required. We addressed it in our planning for the new year by examining the ever changing consumer based needs and we are now addressing it within the JAAA family.

The JAAA staff is very much like a family. With 31 employees, we have a total of 284 accumulated years of tenure at the agency. Employment has ranged from one year to 37 years with very little turnover. Our highest turnover occurred with the

implementation of Kan-Care which caused a layoff of staff. We have been together for the birth of children; graduations, marriage, and death of loved ones.



Jocelyn Lyons

We have helped each other discover new paths for our personal lives and encouraged one another in serving our consumers. Employment at JAAA exemplifies the true meaning of aging in place! However, as

strong as our bond is, we are now faced with losing two valued staff members to retirement. Marsha Ridinger was with JAAA for 35 years and Dorothy Devlin was with JAAA for 10 years.

I remember the day Marsha started working at JAAA, hired as JAAA's fiscal manager. A common bond was formed. Through those

years, we grew to know each other's families, as our husbands were raised in the same community, our mothers were community "social workers" and we shared an interest in crafts. Marsha and I would try new craft projects that often went unfinished (we had the thought it would "be an easy project," but learned it was best to just purchase it) and we were the ones with the messy office desks. We were always there for each other through our personal life trials.

Dorothy for many years was based in our Lawrence offices. Dorothy is my hero. She is small in stature and speaks so softly with wisdom and knowledge. I always enjoyed seeing Dorothy drive her little convertible into the parking lot. Dorothy would be carrying something extra other than her briefcase that might often be something to decorate her office area in the Topeka office or for the general JAAA facility. One would always know the University of Kansas was represented when visiting her office in Topeka or Lawrence. And let me not forget her culinary skills. Dorothy is well respected in the Douglas County community through her volunteer and advocacy efforts. She served as the JAAA ambassador in my inability

to attend some of the community meetings. Dorothy also served as supervisor for MSW student internships at JAAA.

Sometimes feeling like the mother hen, it is hard to say goodbye to both women who were dedicated to the mission of JAAA. So I'm not. It is a "see ya later" opportunity, because Marsha has said she will volunteer for JAAA and I'm sure Dorothy will be able to find time for JAAA as well.

I do not look forward to the coming months or years for a "see ya later" moment, as JAAA has a number of staff who are near or at retirement age. At some point, I know I, as well as others, will be turning in our clip boards, personal manuals, and name badges as we walk away from our offices as a JAAA employee. But I know that JAAA's mission is part of who we are, that no matter how many new faces may come, we know we remain members of a tightly knit family.

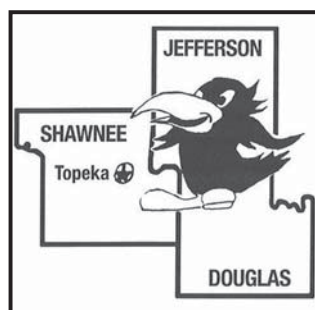
Just as we see the change of season looking out our window, we also see a change in season for JAAA. Good luck and God Bless You Marsha and Dorothy. Enjoy your retirement and don't forget we expect to see you at the JAAA dining table the third Wednesday of each month.

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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.

KDADS Secretary Kari Bruffett focuses on outcomes

By Marsha Henry Goff

Adjectives beginning with E — energetic, enthusiastic and excited — may best describe Kari Bruffett, the individual Gov. Sam Brownback chose last May to follow Shawn Sullivan as Secretary of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.

Another E word that describes Secretary Kari Bruffett is experience. She brings a wealth of experience to the job — experience gained most recently by serving as Director of the Division of Health Care Finance at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE),

where she oversaw Medicaid and played a key role in the development and launch of KanCare. Prior to that position, she spent eight years as a Governmental Affairs Liaison at the University of Kansas Hospital, where she coordinated policy analysis and advocacy, represented the hospital and formed alliances with health care partners.

Bruffett graduated from Victoria High School and earned her bachelor's degree in Communications and Journalism at Fort Hays State University. She spent four years in our nation's capitol and thinks it is helpful that she understands a bit about how DC works. "I enjoyed my time there" she says, "and I left at a good time, too, because some people who stay up there a long time become cynical or jaded about DC . . . I didn't; I just missed Kansas. I really enjoyed that experience,

yet now, being back in state government, there are still policy decisions that affect people's lives, but it's even closer to home than federal policy decisions."

She plans to bring together a diverse group of people — "not just the usual suspects," she says, "although it's important for them

to also be at the table" — and hopes to work toward outcomes. "OK, in five, ten, twenty years, what do we want Kansas to be? What vision can we develop? We may have very different ideas of how to get there," she admits, but believes if the group can develop a shared vision, they can

focus on outcomes rather than programs.

She is committed to the idea that people should have the option to make choices about how and where they want to live and that those choices do not determine their outcomes. "That definitely ties strongly into the mission of this agency and our partner agencies to ensure people are informed about their options."

Her goal is to see that if individuals choose to stay home, they have access to high quality services, and if they choose to go to an adult care home that they are high quality and give good care. She wants seniors to "be able to make choices on their preferences rather than thinking, 'This is the only choice I have.' You don't decide for them."

"We certainly aren't there yet," she says, "although I think Kansas

has taken steps, including starting ADRC [Aging and Disability Resource Center], to get there. I'm excited about keeping that moving forward, ensure that hospitals tell patients about the full range of choices they can make, not just send them home, and make sure the options are available."

The issue is personal for Bruffett. Her 94-year-old grandmother lived in the same house she was born in and loved living on the farm. However, after a couple of hospitalizations, her grandmother realized that family caregiving on a farm outside a small town was not going to suffice. "It turned out, because of medical reasons, she had to make a decision rather than one she would

have liked," Bruffett remarks ruefully, but she believes just looking at options was empowering for her grandmother.

She realizes the challenges faced by the small towns and rural areas of Kansas. She also recognizes the vast differences that exist between rural areas in different parts of the state. Those are some of the issues, she says, "that excite and motivate me."

Secretary Kari Bruffett is aware of the importance of the work KDADS performs, and says it is a "humbling reminder that what we do here is critically important to so many Kansans who are impacted by what people do here . . . and how dedicated those who work here are."



Kari Bruffett



Walking Home

By Connie Michaelis, Marketing Director

I recently read a quote by Ram Dass that says, "We're all just walking each other home." When I read this quote it brought tears to my eyes. The mental picture of walking someone home is so powerful. The very act brings to mind safety, concern, security, love, camaraderie, friendship. Did you ever walk home with a friend from school and have so much fun, that at your destination the two of you decided to walk to the other one's home? The pleasure was in the journey. Did you walk your children to and from school the first few days of school? Have you ever walked with a stranger who has lost his way? Showing someone the way is a much greater kindness than just telling them. The phrase epitomizes

tender loving care. Do you think of walking through life with people? It might not be for a lifetime, it might be a short interval, but if we had that state of mind, we might act differently.

It certainly is a powerful thought as it speaks to our work at McCrite. We literally have the privilege to 'walk people home' as they transition from this life. But it works both ways. Getting to spend time with our elder residents, allows us to have wisdom and guidance in our own journey home. Who is walking who? It is such an honor to work around those that are wise, seasoned and experienced. We see on a daily basis that age is an attitude: old is a state of mind. As kids it seems quite natural to hold hands with a friend and walk home. When you're older you get to hold hands with your friends again! I would add to Ram Dass's quote: "We're all just holding hands and walking each other home." When you have questions about Great Living call the experts at McCrite Plaza 785 267 2960.

Lawrence seniors are excited about CHAMPSS

It has been a long time coming, but CHAMPSS, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging's popular nutrition program for seniors, has arrived in Lawrence at the Hy-Vee stores on 6th Street and Clinton Parkway. Already, 104 persons have signed up and that number is expected to grow significantly with each orientation session that is held.

Sessions are scheduled at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 10 and Monday, December 8 at the Lawrence Public Library. Those who would like to enroll in CHAMPSS must attend an orientation session where the program is explained and they may apply for the swipe cards that allow them to eat one nutritious meal daily — breakfast, lunch or dinner — at the Hy-Vee store of their choice. JAAA Executive Director Jocelyn Lyons believes that, "Choice is the reason for the program's popularity. Seniors like to decide when, what and where they eat."

Andy Sutton, manager of Lawrence's 6th Street Hy-Vee, previ-

ously worked at the Topeka Hy-Vee and is familiar with CHAMPSS. "Both Hy-Vee locations are excited to be part of this program," he says. "We feel it is a great program and health and wellness is an important aspect to us and our customers."

Dick Holzmeister, retired Capitol-Federal vice-president, is a community volunteer who assists seniors with their enrollment. "The CHAMPSS program was introduced to our Optimist Club recently," he explains. "It sounded like an interesting and useful program for seniors. They indicated there was a need for volunteers to register new participants. It sounded like a program I could be involved with. A couple of our members also signed up as volunteers."

The suggested donation per meal is \$3.00 and 12 meals may be loaded onto the card. Reloading is easy by credit card over the phone, check mailed to JAAA or in person with cash or Vision card at Independence, Inc., where JAAA has an office, every Wednesday between the hours of 2:30 and 4:30 p.m.



Jocelyn Lyons exhibits a CHAMPSS swipe card at an orientation session at the Lawrence Public Library. Volunteer Dick Holzmeister is seated in background.

CHAMPSS
Orientation Sessions
at 2:00 p.m.
Monday, November 10
Monday, December 8
Lawrence Public Library
Auditorium



Douglas County seniors listen attentively while Jocelyn Lyons explains the CHAMPSS program.

Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D

That's right it's that time again in which Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging encourages you to review your Medicare Plan for Part D to ensure your prescription coverage is at a price that is affordable for you.

Open enrollment is October 15 through December 7. JAAA staff and dedicated trained volunteers have been scheduling appointments to assist in reviewing Part D plan comparisons. We encourage you to call our office (785-235-1367) immediately, as appointments are filling fast!

JAAA has also scheduled a number of outreach events to afford an opportunity for greater access. Feel free to visit any one of the following locations to receive counseling.

October 30
Pioneer Motive Power Place
Topeka
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

November 4
Caregiver Expo
Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging
2910 S Topeka Boulevard
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

November 5
Caregiver Expo
Winchester Memorial Hospital
Jefferson County
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

November 6
TACC and JAAA Health Fair
Westridge Mall
Topeka
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Douglas County Senior Center does not plan to hold enrollment events. Seniors residing in Douglas County may call (785) 842-0543 to make an appointment for assistance with Medicare Plan D.

KU's Mini Big Event

The Big Event is a day of volunteer community service each spring where KU students, staff and faculty perform tasks — such as yard work and painting — for senior or disabled Lawrence residents. According to Emma Hardwick, Outreach co-chair, The Big Event is “just to say thanks for putting up with college kids all year round.”

This fall, in order to give the committees a test run before the The Big Event in April, a Mini Big Event

will be held on November 16, from noon to 2:00 p.m. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging is compiling a list of people requesting help. If you live in Lawrence and have a task that is too much for you to handle, please call 1-800-798-1366 or contact your case manager if you have one.

Should the Mini Big Event have more requests than the volunteers can reasonably service, you may ask to have the work performed in the much larger April event.

**Please visit us online at
www.jhawkaaa.org.**

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JAAA's next dance has a Hawaiian theme

Mark your calendars! On Saturday, May 9, 2015, Elvis (aka KU Coach Bob Lockwood) and the 1950's Secrets Band plan to whisk you off to Blue Hawaii at JAAA's annual "There's No Place Like Home" fundraising dance. Bob will be performing "The King's" lovely Hawaiian songs as well as a great many other Elvis classics. For those who have not seen him perform, know this: He puts on quite a show and never refuses a request for a photo with a fan.

The popular 1950's Secrets Band plays music of all tempos to suit every musical taste — from rock to country to waltzes and more. Members of the band are talented musicians who have an eclectic mix of day jobs. Best of all, they appear to have as much fun as the dancers and listeners who enjoy their music.

The dance benefits our Guardian Angel Fund which helps seniors in crisis who are in danger of falling through the cracks. "Falling through the cracks" is a trite phrase for a reason: it's true and happens all too often. Frequently, only a little help is needed; sometimes, much more is required.

The dance committee and staff at JAAA are committed to raising as much money as possible for the cause. Consequently, our silent auction and basket drawings have grown over the years to include some wonderful prizes. Last year K-State Men's Basketball Coach Bruce Weber signed a basketball that eventually wound up as a gift at his change of command ceremony for an Army colonel who graduated from K-State.

This year rumor has it that KU Men's Basketball Coach Bill Self plans to provide an autographed basketball and sweatshirt for some lucky Jayhawk fan. The agencies, businesses, and individuals who support and recognize the impor-

tance of Guardian Angel Fund outdo themselves each year in designing baskets and donating prizes for the auction. Last year, Royals tickets provided great fun for four individuals. What a ride the Royals had this season!

From the beginning, Great Overland Station has provided a wonderful venue for our dance and About's Catering has furnished delicious food for appreciative palates. We are so grateful for their continuing support.

Whether you put on your dancing shoes or just come to listen to Elvis and the band and watch the swirling dancers, we hope to see you at the dance. Last year, people attended from surrounding states and as far away as Texas. Be there or be square

JAAA proudly presents

Elvis Hawaii Hawk



May 9, 2015

Great Overland Station

The extraordinary Esther Luttrell

By Marsha Henry Goff

Forget Unsinkable Molly Brown of *Titanic* fame. Esther Luttrell of Topeka has bounced back from adversity more than any ten women and is living her dream of being author, speaker, screenwriter, film producer, director and more. And she has done it all with a ninth grade education. Forced to leave school and go to work after her father left her and her mother, she began wrapping hog jowls for a supermarket. Because she was smart and motivated, other jobs — including writing radio and TV commercials — soon followed.

After marriages, kids and jobs at CBS and MGM writing scripts, directing, producing and serving as executive assistant to the vice-president of MGM-TV, Esther, then 65 and semi-retired, was living in a lovely house in Florida when her husband left her homeless and penniless and launched her on a new career writing mystery novels.

She tells it best on her website: "It was a fluke that I wrote my first novel — at sixty-seven! My husband left me for another woman. His mother. I was driving around, trying to think how to kill him, when it dawned on me I actually had a story plot. I wrote *Murder in the Movies*, did him in really good, and sent it off to a publisher who released it eight months later. It's been in print ever since. Harlequin World Wide Mysteries picked it up for paperback release in 2010, which flattered the daylights out of me. I call it *The Little Book That Just Won't Die*. Thank you, dear ex-husband, for walking off and leaving me to a surprising and wonderful career as a novelist."

For a woman accustomed to

making lemonade out of life's lemons, Esther became determined to help others who were grieving after her son Dean's death. She wrote two books — *Between Heaven and Earth* and *Dear Dean, Love, Mom* — about her spiritual journey following his devastating death and her sense that he is guiding her from beyond.

Esther, the author of 15 published books, has led a remarkably productive life. She is presently excited about a recent venture she describes as "an absurdly silly, funny-as-the-dickens little Florida flick" entitled *Lithium Springs*, which she co-wrote and produced with Carter Lloyd.

She produces screenwriting workshops and is a nationally popular inspirational and motivational speaker. Consider this sentence from her keynote *Reboot, Rebuild, Rejoice* speech: "When you think you've gone as far as you can possibly go, you'll find you've only pushed yourself to the edge of a new beginning."

Esther has had many new beginnings in her life. The world will be a better place if she has a great many more.



Esther holds one of her books for children written under her maiden name. *Between Heaven and Earth*, right, is a book she wrote after her son Dean's untimely death.

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Change is coming for Marsha Ridinger and JAAA

When Marsha Ridinger, OAA Program Manager, turns out the lights in her office at JAAA on October 30, she will end her 34-year tenure at JAAA. Marsha has been an important member of the staff since she was hired for the agency's fiscal position by Donna Kidd, JAAA's first director, in August 1980. The flexibility the job offered was a big plus for Marsha. "Then I was a single mother with young children and it was important to be able to be off for family needs. That is a policy still practiced today."

"I had one week with the previous fiscal manager and I didn't even know what an area plan was — I was just observing — and I do remember this, they were all so excited because they had just gotten their report back from the state saying there were absolutely no questions or anything about their area plan for the next year. I didn't understand what that meant, but I do now having submitted so many and knowing that the state usually has questions."

After that one week, Marsha was on her own. "We were a much smaller agency then, just six or seven employees. We only had Older American Acts' programming so we didn't have all the various grants that Jean [Stueve, Fiscal Manager] has to account for now. Our ledger entries were handwritten. We had no computers then."

Over the years, the staff more than quadrupled in size and JAAA placed offices in Douglas and Jefferson Counties. Marsha is pleased that the agency consistently has been in the forefront of practices allowing employees to care for their family needs. She is especially pleased that the Board has just instituted a "Bring your infant to Work" policy that enables

both mothers and fathers to bring infants to work when necessary.

During her early years at JAAA, Marsha says she especially "enjoyed being out in the field with providers, visiting meal sites and in the senior centers. There was just more contact with the seniors using the service."

She admits she has missed having that contact as her responsibilities grew, "I don't have a lot of that anymore. It's just gotten down to paper work and monitoring the grants." Her desk, covered with papers, shows the truth of her statement and is the reason her co-worker and friend, Jean Stueve, posted a card with a quote from Albert Einstein in honor of Marsha's desk: If a cluttered desk is the sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?

The use of computers is a change that has been difficult for her. "I'm not into techie IT stuff. It's a change — a very big change — and it's going to continue to change. All of Accounting use computers. I may have a mental block. I'm probably trainable; I'm just not that interested in computers. I don't have a smart phone. I do have a home computer, but when I get home, I don't want to be in front of a computer, I just want to be in the yard if it's nice."

Marsha has fought against her dislike of change, even while recognizing its necessity, by posting a card on her wall illustrated with butterflies — "I love butterflies!" — that reads: If nothing ever changed, there'd be no butterflies.

For the last 23 of her years with the agency, Marsha, who was born and raised in North Shawnee County, has commuted an hour each morning and evening from her home in Wabaunsee County. "My husband Bill and I visited Lake Wabaunsee and fell in love with it.



Marsha Ridinger seated at her paper-covered desk (note butterfly change sign at right).

We bought a home at the lake for a weekend retreat and found that we were spending so much time there, we moved there full-time."

Marsha and Bill recently moved about six miles from the lake to the town of Eskridge. During her first days of retirement, she plans to unpack the boxes from the move. "And in spring, I'm looking forward to working in the garden and yard. As I'm driving to work, I see people doing that and I just want to be one of those people." She and Bill have visited 49 of the 50 states

on their touring motorcycle and traveling in their motor home is also in their future.

She acknowledges she will miss the people and the social side of the agency. She plans to volunteer at JAAA and elsewhere. "I likely will find a part-time job somewhere and I'll pop in to Jayhawk. We're a family and the people who leave do return for visits."

Most assuredly, Marsha will be greatly missed by JAAA staff and welcomed with open arms when she returns to visit.



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Cataract Surgery: Two (hopefully three) outcomes

Eye-yi-yi!

Cataract surgery? Me? At my age? Yep. I blame years of sunbathing while reading without the protection of sunglasses. Smart too late on two counts. Don't you just hate that?

Back in the day, I spent hours in the sun — either in the backyard or at the pool while watching the kids swim and dive. My friend Jean often met me at the pool and we would lounge on our beach towels and talk about all the leisure time we would have when our kids were grown. "How," I recently asked her, "should we have known that those were the days when we had leisure time?" I sure haven't had much downtime since.

Only my left eye required surgery. I suspect it is because I favored lying on my left side causing the sun to bounce off the white pages into my left eye. Only thing I can figure anyway.

You need to know this: I am scared of needles, blood and surgery. And I am really scared of anesthesia. True, with my cataract surgery there was no general anesthesia, just Versed and a pain reliever (likely Fentanyl), which together provide "conscious sedation" or "twilight sleep." Together, the two drugs are supposed to prevent pain and anxiety during the surgery . . . and, since it's a memory blocker, if you do suffer pain or stress, you won't remember it. OK, where was this stuff when I was

giving birth to two kids?

I put off cataract surgery for a couple of years, even though Dr. Mary P, my ophthalmologist, walks on water as far as I'm concerned. She operates in our local hospital (a place I'm glad I went since Joan Rivers' tragic experience with anesthesia in a doctor's clinic). I opted

for laser surgery requiring that I pay \$750 out of pocket because Medicare will pay only for surgery by a blade (I forgot to mention I'm also scared of blades). Insureds who want laser surgery have to pay the difference. If you noticed the word Medicare, you probably have concluded that I'm not too

young to have cataract surgery. As for me, I think I am and I'm sticking to it.

I went home shortly after surgery with a shield taped to my left eye. The next day in Dr. Mary P's office, the seven of us who had surgery the previous day showed up for our individual unveilings. The waiting room looked like a pirate convention. One woman with her right eye shielded said that was her second surgery in two weeks since she was already seeing 20/20 in the first eye.

I was spooked when my vision wasn't anywhere close to 20/20 at my unveiling. However, five days later, I was nearly 20/20 and I expect to have perfect vision in my left eye when I see Dr. Mary P in a couple of weeks. As for my right eye which doesn't require surgery, I'm wearing a contact in it for far

vision which I didn't need when I was younger. That may indeed be an "age thing" but I can't help thinking how fortunate I am to live in a time and place where vision can be restored . . . even if I did have to look like a pirate for a day.

Stick a needle in my eye?

*Cross my heart,
Hope to die,
Stick a needle
In my eye!*

That rhyme made me keep my promises during my entire childhood. It wasn't the dying part so much as the thought of a needle piercing my eye. And yet today, Dr. B., retina specialist, did exactly that . . . twice.

My exuberance over recent cataract surgery—and my nearly 20/20 vision—lasted a week and a half. Then the vision in my left eye became progressively blurred. Two days of that sent me back to my ophthalmologist who, after documenting my vision at 20/50 and performing an eye scan, diagnosed me with CME (cystoid macular edema), increased my steroid eye drop to 4 times daily and added an anti-inflammatory eye drop.

My vision continued to decrease which resulted in a panicky Sunday phone conversation with the on-call ophthalmologist who increased my steroid eye drop to every two hours. By Tuesday, my vision had decreased to 20/100 and the eye scan showed further swelling of the macula prompting a referral and subsequent visit to Dr. B. He ordered more tests, including one where dye was injected—remember I hate needles?—into my hand, a bright light flashed in my eye while what looked to me like 3-D color pictures were taken of my eyeball. For about 10 minutes post dye injection, everything was bathed in

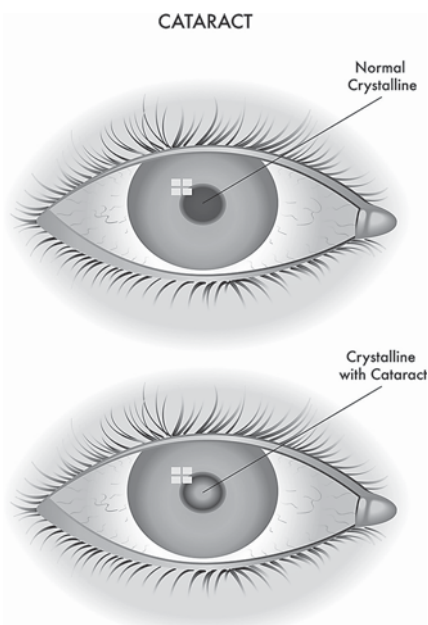
a rosy glow . . . even people.

The diagnosis was Irvine Gass Syndrome, the name for CME that is caused by cataract surgery. Who knew? Drs. Irvine and Gass, that's who! Depending which doctor you talk with and what website you visit, the condition is rare . . . or not. Smart too late again: I learned that preoperative treatment might have prevented this condition. Studies are precious few, but those that exist show that an anti-inflammatory drop in the eye a day before surgery and continuing for a few days after resulted in no I-G Syndrome for those in control groups receiving the drop, while I-G Syndrome occurred in varying percentages in control groups without the drop. Dang!

There is no protocol for preoperative treatment for cataract surgery patients who have no risk factors, such as diabetes. Treatment is considered expensive: \$183 with coupon (I checked), but some surgeons routinely pre-treat by giving patients samples of the drop. As a patient who paid \$750 out-of-pocket for laser surgery because it is safer than a blade, I wish I had been offered the option to decide for myself whether to have the preoperative drop. My complication is very rare, but if my right eye ever requires cataract surgery, you can bet the bank I'll have that pretreatment drop.

Sure would be better than the two injections I had in my eye today. However, if a needle in my eye restores my nearly 20/20 vision, I'll be a happy camper. Consider this posting a public service message to all of you who may one day be candidates for cataract surgery. It is the article I wish I had read before I had mine.

— Marsha Henry Goff
www.jestforgrins.com



Jackie Shmalberg is dedicated to helping others

By Marsha Henry Goff

When 13-year-old Jackie Kreider volunteered as a Candy Striper at the hospital in her hometown of Chanute, she never dreamed it was the beginning of a lifetime of volunteering. She enjoyed everything about her hospital duties and learned she had a compelling desire to help others. "My parents encouraged my sisters and me to be involved in activities and to try new things. They always told us we could do anything we set our minds to."

When she married Bob Shmalberg and later moved to Lawrence where the family owned and operated Scotch Cleaners, she and her husband quickly became active volunteers in the community. She is pleased that volunteering has become a family tradition with their two sons, Scott and Jeff, being active volunteers in the community. While Jackie's volunteer efforts are many and diverse, her 46-year volunteer commitment to Lawrence Memorial Hospital is an amazing example of her reliability and devotion to a good cause.

Allyson Leland, LMH Director

of Volunteer Services, has worked with Jackie for 24 of those 46 years and notes that Jackie "currently serves as a volunteer Wayfinder helping persons get from one place to another throughout the hospital. She has served on the hospital Board of Trustees and has been President of the LMH Auxiliary. Jackie is a tremendous supporter of the hospital and has been a volunteer since 1968."

Additionally, she served on the hospital's Strategic Planning Committee and on the LMH Endowment Board. Wayfinder is only the most recent of many volunteer jobs at the hospital that Jackie has performed. "I began working in the gift shop, then as an escort where I often pushed patients in wheelchairs, gave tours of the hospital for school children, worked with second graders in a play hospital, took and delivered new baby photos, staffed the information desk and helped with breast center mammograms."

When her sons were young, she volunteered at their schools and with Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. She has a long record of being active in Plymouth Congregational



Jackie Shmalberg receiving her Marguerite Lockwood Volunteer of the Year award in 2007.

Church. It is apparent that Lawrence, Douglas County and The University of Kansas have benefited in so many ways over the years from her volunteer activities which include: serving on boards of Douglas County Historical Society, Lawrence Arts Center, KU Museum of Natural History Advisory Board, member of Friends of Lied and Women Philanthropists for KU and charter member of the Law-

rence Civic Choir and of Bosom Buddies, a breast cancer support group. Jackie is an active member of the PEO Sisterhood and has served as Co-chair of United Way's Neighborhood Drive.

Jackie has likely forgotten many of her volunteer activities, but she knows what volunteering has done for her: "I think the rewards come from the satisfaction you get from the service you give to others."

Project Elder Cool Report

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, in partnership with Bishop Sullivan Center in Kansas City, Missouri, and Mr. Goodcents Subs and Pasta, provided 75 window air conditioners this past summer to low-income elderly living in the counties of Douglas and Shawnee.

JAAA's Project ElderCool is funded by Mr. Goodcents. Wichita Technical Institute HVAC students installed 24 air conditioners at

no cost. Heat causes more deaths than any other weather-related cause and seniors were delighted to receive their free units as evidenced by the following letters:

"This was a miracle for me! Now I can sleep at night and be in my own home where I want to be. The difference it made is huge! Thank you."

"Thank you so much. This saved my life. I had five fans. Thank you with all my heart."



Left: A happy client poses with his air conditioner. **Right:** Students from Wichita Technical Institute prepare to install an air conditioner.

Caregiver Support

By Michele Dillon

JAAA Caregiver Specialist

A recent survey performed by the Alzheimer's Association showed a global lack of information about Alzheimer's. The Association polled 6,307 people from 12 countries about their knowledge of the disease. The survey revealed that:

- 60 percent of the people surveyed believe that Alzheimer's is a typical part of aging.
- 40 percent did not know that Alzheimer's is a progressive, fatal disease.
- 37 percent thought that only people with a family history of the disease are at risk.

The Alzheimer's Association urges everyone to learn more about Alzheimer's, and to work together to raise awareness. Visit the Alzheimer's Association website (www.alz.org) to find a wealth of information.

Also, did you know there are vast differences in behavior of those with Alzheimer's, Lewy Body, vascular and Frontal Lobe dementia. All of these affect different areas of the brain. Reversible types of dementia include Urinary Tract Infections, B-12 deficiency, thyroid problems or side effects from medications.

Learn more about this and other caregiving needs at our fall expos

to celebrate you, the caregiver.

November is National Caregiver's Month. In 1994, the National Family Caregivers Association began promoting the celebration of family caregivers during the week of Thanksgiving. President Clinton signed the first presidential proclamation in 1997 and every president since - Democrat and Republican alike - has issued an annual proclamation appreciating family caregivers. As interest



Michele Dillon

grew in family caregiving issues, National Family Caregivers Week became National Family Caregivers Month. In honor of you, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging is sponsoring a caregiver expo. This expo will feature educational booths to help you through your journey. Some presenters will be the Alzheimer's Association, the Parkinson's Association, local libraries and senior centers to name a few.

Our expo dates are as follows: Shawnee County, November 4th at Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging; Jefferson County, November 5th at F W Houston Medical Center in Winchester; and Douglas County, November 6th at Douglas County Senior Services in Lawrence. All locations will be from 10:00 to 2:00. Take part in our raffles and know that you are appreciated for all you do.

Call Kevin at (785) 841-9417 to place your display ad in the Winter 2015 issue of Amazing Aging! The deadline is January 15.

Dorothy Devlin to retire from JAAA

Dorothy Devlin loves her work at JAAA — so much so that she is ambivalent about retiring. While she says she enjoys and will greatly miss the staff and customers, she will not miss driving to work through this winter's ice and snow.

Dorothy already retired once when she left Lawrence Presbyterian Manor after 20 years there, the last 11 as Executive Director. She took some time off, but in 2002 began her employment at JAAA as a case worker. "It was a happy thing to do," she says, "in terms of continuing to work with seniors and being able to assist them in remaining successfully in their homes."

Dorothy is well-suited to her work by both her compassionate nature and higher education (she earned her Master's in Social Welfare Administration and Planning at the University of Kansas in 1988). She sees her work at JAAA as a challenge, allowing her the opportunity to grow as the agency

evolved. She especially enjoys her interaction with customers: "Many of them are really good story tellers and have led interesting lives."

She says the best thing about her time at JAAA was "the flexibility to allow me to work part time has been an advantage and enabled me to pursue other activities and it's been great to supervise the interns." The opportunity to office in Lawrence where she lives has also been advantageous.

Dorothy was hard-pressed to find a downside to her job, but finally admitted that it can be "physically taxing" and that she "wasn't looking forward to December and January weather."

Among her many interests, this busy lady serves as a docent at Spencer Museum of Art. However, because of her fondness for people and her willingness to help others, we suspect Dorothy's life will become even busier after retirement.



Need help with your Part D Medicare Drug Insurance?

**Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging
2910 SW Topeka Boulevard
is offering walk-in assistance
from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
on these Saturdays**

**November 1
November 8
November 22**



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