

Amazing Aging!

For Seniors and Those Who Love Them

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc. • May/June 2003

JAAA • 1720 SW Topeka Blvd. • Topeka, KS 66612 • Phone: 785-235-1367

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Jayhawk Area Agency

on Aging:

- Is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization
- Advocates on aging issues, builds community partnerships and implements programs to help seniors live independent and dignified lives in Douglas, Jefferson and Shawnee counties in Kansas
- Is funded by private donations, tax-deductible contributions, federal funds, the Kansas Health Foundation, 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

From the Executive Director's Desk

Older Americans Month: A Time to Recognize Older Adult and their Caregivers and Support the Services they Depend On

Since its inception forty years ago, Older Americans Month has been a time for the entire nation to recognize the older adults in their communities. This year Older Americans Month recognizes that, "*What We Do Makes a Difference*," in ensuring that the needs of older Americans are met.

Today, the older population is much different than it was during the first Older Americans Month in 1963 when only 17 million Americans were age 65. One in six Americans is age 60 or older. This includes four million Americans 85 or older who are at risk of losing their independence without critical support services that allow them to remain in their homes and communities. It is projected that by the year 2030, the 85 plus population will be triple what it is today.

The Older Americans Act (OAA), has been the foundation of services for older adults since its enactment in 1965 and is at the core of our national system of home and community-based care. The OAA is based on the principle that older adults are entitled to spend their retirement years in good health, independence, and dignity.

Currently, over 22 million U.S. households are serving in family caregiving roles for persons over age 50 and that number will increase rapidly as the population ages and medical science continues to extend life. JAAA's programs also focus on the needs of these caregivers of older adults who help make it possible for their older family members and friends to remain in their own homes.

Over the course of this month, I urge you to contact your congressional representatives to ask them to ensure that the older adults in your community receive the support they deserve not only during Older Americans Month but whenever they need it.

Sincerely,

Maria C. Russo

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Announcing Senior's Financial Planning Seminar

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging and the Kansas State Treasurer's Office are pleased to announce a financial planning seminar exclusively for seniors.

The seminar will give seniors the opportunity to obtain financial advice from seasoned professionals in the fields of accounting and personal finance, with an emphasis on financial issues facing seniors in our state.

State Treasurer Lynn Jenkins, CPA, was sworn in as the 37th State Treasurer January 13, 2003.

The State Treasurer's office is responsible for the timely receipt and deposit of all state revenues. State Funds totaling more than \$10 billion pass through the office annually. The State Treasurer's office processes receipts from 120 state agencies.

Jenkins entered the post of State Treasurer after serving as a State Senator. Prior to serving in the Senate, Jenkins served for two years in the Kansas House of Representatives. Jenkins is a Certified Public Accountant with over 16 years of experience.

Jenkins, a 6th-generation Kansan, was raised on a dairy farm in Holton. She is a graduate of Kansas State University and Weber State College. Jenkins, 39, has a degree in Accounting with a minor in Economics. Lynn is married to Scott Jenkins, also from rural Holton. They have been married for 19 years and have two children, Hayley and Hayden.

Jeff Wagaman serves the citizens of Kansas as the Assistant State Treasurer. He works closely with the staff of the agency to fulfill its statutory duties in the most efficient, customer friendly methods possible. His public service career spans seventeen years and he has worked in a variety of positions.

Wagaman formerly served as Executive Director of the Kansas Corporation

Commission, the state's utility regulatory agency for approximately four years. He has also worked as deputy Secretary of the Kansas Department of Administration, Chief of Staff to the Senate President and Administrative Assistant to the Senate Majority Leader. He is a graduate of Washburn University and has a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. In 2001, the Kansas Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration selected Wagaman as Public Administrator of the Year for public service to the people of Kansas. He is active in the community in numerous charities.

Maria Russo has been Director of Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging since November of 1996. Ms. Russo has a Bachelor of General Studies with an emphasis on Psychology and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Kansas. Maria also has a Master of Public Administration with an emphasis on Non-Profit Management from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and is a Stanley Fisher Outstanding Graduate Student Award recipient.

Maria is a member of the Topeka South Rotary Club and has served for three years on the Board of Directors. She is also a member of the Board of Directors for Christmas in April and is a member of the Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association, and served on the Board of Directors for three years.

The seminar will take place at the Kansas Historical Society, 6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka KS on June 6, 2003 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Attendance for this seminar is free and is offered as a public service for area seniors, but reservations are highly recommended.

JAAA Seeks Volunteers for Prescription Drug Program



Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging needs your assistance. Specifically, the agency is seeking volunteers for the SHICK Prescription Drug Program.

This service provides the volunteers the opportunity to help seniors 60 years of age and older complete the application process to obtain prescription drugs at little or no cost. Patient assistance programs are privately funded programs sponsored by pharmaceutical companies and drug manufacturers. The

programs are designed to assist low-income individuals who are having difficulty affording their prescription medications.

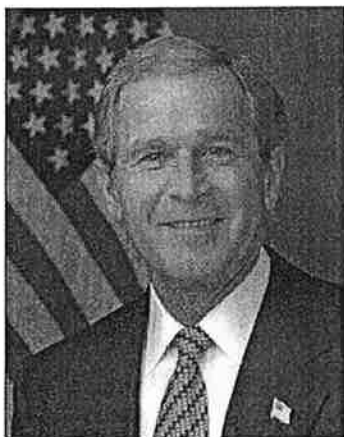
As the cost of prescription drugs continues to escalate nationwide, many seniors must choose if they are going to buy groceries or prescriptions. Some seniors will ban together, purchase a prescription, and then take each other's prescriptions at the wrong dosage. Many elderly believe it is better to take the wrong dosage than not take the medication at all.

Society today is one of business technology. We grew up with computers and most of us can work on one. Accessing the Prescription Drug Programs applications is done on the Internet. The vast majority of our elderly population does not have access to the Internet, and they do not know how to navigate a computer. What a tremendous feeling of accomplishment to help our seniors obtain the medications they so desperately need by using a computer skill most of us take for granted.

We need your help today. **Please call Diane McDermed, Volunteer Coordinator, at (785) 235-1367 for information and to sign up to be a Prescription Drug Program Volunteer.** You will be helping many seniors to access the prescription drugs they need, and restore their dignity by allowing them to live the healthy lifestyle they deserve.

"My Administration is coordinating with State and Area Agencies on Aging, and faith-based and community organizations to better provide essential services...to make it easier for older Americans to remain in their homes...which helps preserve their dignity and independence."

- George W. Bush



Celebrate Older Americans Month!
May 2003

... makes a difference

Children, Talk to Your Aging Parents - By Charles Moore



My advice to the adult children who may some day have to face the reality of caring for their parents is this: Don't put off the inevitable. At some point you may be faced with the situation of simply having to do what you believe is in the best interest of your

aging parents. In our case it was a parent with Alzheimer's.

Make every attempt and take opportunities as they become available to discuss the issue with your aging parents. And, as parents, I would encourage you to initiate these kinds of discussion with your children should they choose not to bring it up.

Children and parents alike are not doing either one justice by ignoring the inevitable. After all, we are all getting older and none of us is immune to the illnesses that come with the aging process. Nor may we always have the capacity to make the kinds of decisions necessary should we become incapacitated.

While our family attempted to have such a discussion with one of our family members who had been failing, it was always met with resistance and denials that this could or ever would happen. Consequently we ultimately had to turn to the courts to assist us in seeking guardianship/conservatorship in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the parent.

It has turned out to be one of the most loving acts of kindness. We have come to appreciate the fact that we at least live in a society where such systems are in place to protect the rights of others while still giving us the ability to assist those persons most vulnerable and not able to make decisions in their best interest as well as our own.

“Be joyful always...and give thanks in all circumstances.” To this biblical verse we have added “because things could always be worse.” So no matter how gloomy things might seem at the time, just be thankful that things are not worse and that you live in a country that offers protection and assistance to everyone.

When it is all said and done, regardless of the guilt we have felt

Talk to Your Parents,
Continued

throughout this entire process, we have come to the realization that what we did was truly an act of love for our parent. Since taking the necessary action, we have witnessed many moments of hugs and kind words spoken between a daughter and her father that might otherwise have passed us by.

Today Richard lives with us in our home rather than an institutional setting or in another town far away with no friends or family close by. He has become an integral part of our everyday life. While there are a variety of adult care homes in Topeka that may be a viable option for some, we believe the choice we have made is the better one for us.

We feel fortunate to live in a community where there are many services and resources available through the county health department, **[Jayhawk] Area Agency on Aging**, our local church and so much more that make caring for Richard a joy rather than a burden.

Suffice it to say that family relationships are of utmost importance in God's eye. The Scripture makes it clear that "if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than the unbeliever." With biblical passages like that, what else can one do?

Charles Moore lives in Topeka.

IN MEMORIAM

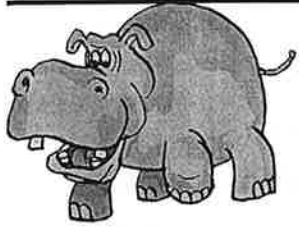


The following individuals and organizations have donated to Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc., in memory of a Elizabeth ("Betty") Knox. We thank each donor for his/her generosity, and for honoring Mrs. Knox with a gift for the future.

Elizabeth Knox Memorial

Dan and Debbie Latta
John & Elizabeth Grubb
Diane Trevino & Renea Bulmer
Pat & Ina Patterson
Denny & Sally Gragg
ADAPA Incorporated

6 Have You Heard of HIPAA?



HIPAA may sound vaguely like the name of a “massive thick-skinned animal living in or around rivers of tropical Africa,” (Source, www.dictionary.com), but HIPAA is the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996*.

Health care providers are subject to numerous state and federal laws addressing the privacy of health information. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has issued a set of regulations to implement the privacy provisions of HIPAA. Those regulations are called “Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information,” or the “Privacy Rule.” All health care agencies are required to comply with the Privacy Rule by April 14, 2003, and this includes Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging.

JAAA has taken several steps to ensure that we are in compliance with HIPAA regulations regarding the privacy and security of the protected health information of our clients - past, present, and future. HIPAA regulations are based on two very basic principles:

1. Health information belongs to the client, and
2. Customers should be informed about all the uses and disclosures of his/her health information.

The types of protected health information includes the following: individually identifiable health information which is communicated orally or in written form, via face-face contact, paper or electronically. This protected information is either created or received by JAAA and relates to past, present or future health conditions, health care or payments. Individually identifiable health

information (IIHI) is any information that connects health data to a specific person, including such facts as name, date of birth, social security number, Medicaid number, address, phone number, and/or photo.

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging may:

- Disclose protected health information to family members or a personal representative of a client’s location, condition, or death **ONLY IF** the client is unavailable or incapacitated and professional judgment deems it necessary to disclose the information.
- If a client is available and has the capacity to make health care decisions, JAAA will first obtain the client’s permission and provide the client with the opportunity to object before the information is disclosed. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging will not release any protected health information (I.e. name, date of birth, Social Security number, Medicaid number, address, phone number or photograph) to anyone other than those identified by the customer.

“Our agency is founded on the tenet that clients’ trust in our agency and its employees is essential to the fulfillment of our mission - to help seniors live independent and dignified lives.”
- *Maria Russo,*
Executive Director

“Ensuring confidentiality of client information is essential to our clients’ well-being and their trust in this agency,” said Maria Russo, JAAA Executive Director. “Our agency is founded on the tenet that clients’ trust in our agency and its employees is essential to the fulfillment of our mission - to help seniors live independent and dignified lives.”

Detailed information regarding the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)*, as well as Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging’s *Notice of Privacy Practices* is public knowledge and available for review. For more information or to obtain copies of these documents, please contact Patty Nott, JAAA Privacy Officer, at (785) 235-1367.



“For every year a single client remains in the community (as opposed to living in a nursing home), the state saves an average of \$8,362.68.”

- Univ. of Kansas School of Social Welfare, Office of Aging and Long Term Care, June 2002

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides a wide variety of in-home services, helping seniors live independent and dignified lives.

Send your tax-deductible donation today.

For more information, call 785-235-1367.

Thank you for your support!

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Yes, I will support programs that help seniors live independent and dignified lives with the following gift:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Contribution: \$ _____

(Check or money order only, please, payable to Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
Please mail this form with your contribution to:

**Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
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