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

www.jhawkaaa.org

Susan Harris: JAAA’s new Executive Director (see story on page 3).
A Message from Susan Harris, JAAA Executive Director

I have been through many changes throughout the time that I have been with Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging and by far the biggest change is occurring now as I take over the helm of the ship as Executive Director. It is not without mixed emotions. I have had the privilege and pleasure of working with Jocelyn Lyons, our previous Executive Director, for the past 13 years and have had many opportunities to learn and grow under her leadership. Her forward thinking and one size doesn’t fit all programming approach has been a great benefit to JAAA and the seniors we serve and her presence in this office will most definitely be missed!

I am excited about the opportunity to carry on the mission of JAAA and to lead this great agency into the future. I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their support, well wishes, and words of advice as I embark on this journey in my career. We have an amazing staff that is always ready to roll up their sleeves and get things done, putting the best interests of the consumer in the forefront. A leader is only as good as the team they have and I would say Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging has the best team of staff a director could ask for.

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging has always been a leader in aging services and has built its foundations on providing accurate, reliable, non-biased, relevant information and services regarding all aspects of aging. We strive to provide excellent customer service that is friendly, compassionate, and person-centered putting the needs, wants, and desires of the consumer first. I have always placed excellent customer service as a top priority and will continue to have this as a priority for all staff at JAAA.

We will continue to provide services and supports to the aging populations of Jefferson, Douglas, and Shawnee Counties while working to increase and improve the services we provide. This will be challenging from a budgeting standpoint as we, along with other non-profits, seem to be consistently faced with having to do more with less funds. There is just more need than can be met with typical funding resources and JAAA will need to work toward finding new funding streams and partnerships to help meet the demand. With that said, I would like to report that the Senior Care Act program which helps individuals age 60 and older in need of in-home services was approved for full restoration of funds in the amount of $2.1 million by the Kansas Legislature. Thank you to the Kansas Legislators for your support of Kansas seniors.

Caregiver Support Groups

At Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, we know that one of the most difficult, yet rewarding, jobs an individual can do is to serve as a caregiver to a loved one. We also know that to take care of your loved one, you must first take care of yourself. Please find time to visit one of our support groups in your area.

Baldwin Methodist Church
First Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.
August 2 September 6 October 4

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging
Third Friday of each month at noon
August 18 September 15 October 20

Topeka Public Library
Second Monday of each month at 3:30
August 14 September 11 October 9
Susan Harris, JAAA’s new executive director, has a ‘can do’ attitude

By Marsha Henry Goff

Susan Harris, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging’s new executive director, never once doubted her ability to do her new job. What she did worry about before applying for the position was whether, as a single mother, she could do justice both to the job and her three-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Frannie. She wondered about the amount of time the job would require and whether she could give Frannie the childhood she wanted to give her.

She sat down with Jocelyn Lyons and asked if she believed the job was doable for a single mother with a young child. Susan reports that Jocelyn replied, “With your work ethic and your abilities to multi-task, I don’t think it will be an issue for you.”

With that vote of confidence, Susan decided she could do the job well and also be a good mommy to her daughter. “I have great support from my parents, my friends and their parents. I can do this. I am excited about the opportunity to continue the legacy Jocelyn leaves behind at JAAA. Her leadership and forward thinking have provided opportunities for JAAA to shine and continue to be the leader in aging services in the communities we serve. Having spent the last 13 years under her direction and leadership, it has been ingrained in me the importance of staying in the forefront of aging services and to strive to pursue and incorporate new ways of providing services. I look forward to continuing with the momentum and development of outside of the box programs and opportunities to meet the needs of the ever changing aging population.”

Susan is accustomed to success. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Washburn University with a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Human Services. In her 14 years at JAAA, 13 of them under the leadership of Lyons, she has steadily moved up the ladder to more responsibility, from her original position as case manager to case manager supervisor to manager of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Program. Previously, she worked as a case manager for TARC.

She says that she has “always had a pull for helping people.” In junior high school in Salina, where she grew up, she began working with a family that had three children who had Down’s syndrome. It was a job she continued through high school, helping them with their IEPs and trying to get them up to speed developmentally. She also worked for a woman who had severe rheumatoid arthritis and who ran a small craft shop. “I helped with her housekeeping, laundry and grocery shopping and I just really enjoyed that, the helping aspect of it.”

Susan initially attended college with the idea that she would become a special education teacher, but decided that she did not want to teach. She says that after she graduated from college, “I got a job in case management at TARC. I did that for about three or four years and then decided I wanted to try something different. Jayhawk had a job opening in case management and I applied and I’ve been here ever since. Helping people has always been my calling and once I got here to Jayhawk and learned the mission and learned what Jayhawk is about and what they do, I just fell in love with it. I have no plans of leaving. I feel like Social Services is my calling, but I really feel like my niche is the aging population.”

In her nearly four decades of life, Susan has experienced, and can relate to, some of the trials endured by many of the clients JAAA serves. She was widowed eleven years ago when her beloved husband suffered a massive heart attack. She understands and identifies with the overwhelming grief and loss of direction felt when a loved one dies.

Susan is a proponent of customer service and recognizes that an important component of good customer service is to retain employees. “Turnover anywhere is not good, but here it is especially detrimental because you do have such intricate things that we have to know and understand. Even with our information department there is so much knowledge that we expect an employee to have about the areas we work in and the counties we work in and the services available. If we have turnover we would not be able to do the adequate customer services that we do.”

She says JAAA’s infant at work policy and generous leave policy helps retain employees, but notes that the pay scale could be improved. “We all know that most folks in Social Service are not in it for the money,” she says, but notes that “the majority of the folks who have left in the 14 years that I’ve been here have left because they were able to get a substantial more amount of money somewhere else that outweighed our flexibility.”

Susan recognizes the challenges that lie ahead “especially with the state of the state, city, county and federal budgets. It’s in so much turmoil now with all of that, the threat of less and less dollars that fund our programs is definitely out there, so trying to come up with efficiencies, trying to work with what we’ve got more efficiently and, then also, trying to raise some other revenues, however that may be. One of the things I’m going to be looking at for Jayhawk is efficiency and how we...”
Susan Harris
CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

do things, trying to find a way we can streamline processes.”

Jocelyn Lyons, JAAA's former executive director, has absolute confidence that Susan Harris will be able to meet those challenges. “Susan shares the passion in the mission of JAAA,” she says. “During her tenure of 14 years at JAAA, she has demonstrated her leadership abilities to guide JAAA forward in creating new avenues to make JAAA more broadly known within the tri-county area. I am excited and look forward to the changes she will bring to the aging network.”

New Book for Caregivers: What I Like When I Can’t Say

Michele Dillon, JAAA Aging and Disability Resource Center Manager, has written a book that is a journaling tool for all who want friends and loved ones to know their story from childhood to adulthood. Should circumstances lead to you no longer being able to speak or communicate, your words will be in this book. Each page has paragraphs to guide you in writing on a particular subject, with plenty of space for your personal information. Once completed, the book is to be shared with those who love you and will care for you. They will know your preferences and needs, leading to a better caregiving experience for all. The book is currently available on Amazon.com.

Call Kevin at 841-9417 to place your display ad in the Fall 2017 issue of Amazing Aging! The deadline is October 15.

Coming Soon!

In the fall issue of Topeka Magazine, read more about Susan Harris, JAAA’s new executive director.

Also, learn more about Washburn University’s popular WU Moves Community Wellness Program.

The fall issue will be available by Labor Day.
Jocelyn Lyons was guest of honor at a retirement party befitting the end of a 40-year career on June 30 at Top of the Tower. A host of family and friends — including one school friend who came from Denver — celebrated her years of work at JAAA and wished her well as she begins a new adventure which she hopes may not require heels.

She was presented with a plaque reading For Jocelyn Lyons — In appreciation of her 40 years of service to Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging. She was also presented with the gift of a privacy fence, to which she may affix the plaque, so she may enjoy her morning coffee in peace as she watches her grass grow.

To say she was overwhelmed is an understatement, but she delivered a lovely speech in which she reflected on her time with JAAA and what it meant to her. Later, she offered this statement: “I would like to thank the planning committee, Cyrene Holt, Tamera Cash and Marsha Goff, for arranging the most beautiful retirement reception I could have ever dreamed. I was surprised and humbled by the number of persons attending to wish me well and only wish I could have talked with and thanked everyone individually. I have made many friends along the way and will miss the aging network, but I especially will miss the staff that really has been my family. We have shared and supported each other during major life changes. I am so proud of their work, of them as individuals and blessed to have had them in my life for they have truly left their imprint on my heart.”

Jocelyn Lyons served JAAA with heart and humor, with love and common sense and always, always with the goal of making life better for seniors. She will be missed.
By Marsha Henry Goff

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging’s “There’s No Place Like Home” fundraising dance for Guardian Angel Fund was bittersweet this year because it was the last dance for JAAA Executive Director Jocelyn Lyons, who retired on June 30. She was greatly surprised to be serenaded by Elvis (aka Bob Lockwood) who sang “Memories” to a tearful Jocelyn before Ray Goff presented her with a bouquet of red roses in appreciation of her long service to the agency.

The theme this year was “Elvis in Blue Hawaii,” a reprise of the 2015 dance headlined by Bob Lockwood, retired KU Coach of Volleyball and Gymnastics. Hawaiian shirts and dresses were in abundance as were leis. Bob puts on quite a show and is very generous in sharing his talent, a few teddy bears which he gives to attendees as he sings “Teddy Bear,” as well as leis, scarves and Mardi Gras beads. Pianist Lanny Snodgrass, Seattle, a USAF Colonel and psychiatrist, dressed as Liberace, thrilled the audience with his lovely melodies.

The 1950’s Secrets Band, always a crowd favorite, was comprised of lead guitarist Jeff Nelson, De Soto, a retired Douglas County Deputy Sheriff who now owns a handyman service; bass guitarist Dr. Park Lockwood, PhD, Lawrence, a professor at Washburn University; drummer Jim Hart, De Soto, a retired firefighter; pianist Lt. Colonel Lanny Snodgrass, MD, PhD, Seattle, Military physician and Washington University professor; vocalist Debbie Husted, Lawrence, a legal assistant; and keyboardist Brian Cooper, Shawnee Mission, a retired public school principal.

Honorary Chairs Renae and Dereck Hood kicked off the event by dancing to “Lost in the Fifties Tonight.” Renae was the Topeka winner of Capitol Federal’s Grand Giving contest and named JAAA as the charity to receive $1,000 should she win. She works for Innovative Vein as part of their traveling medical team and Dereck has served with the Kansas Highway Patrol for 28 years.

Honored Guests from Douglas County Joanne and Ron Hurst are a busy couple who have blessed Lawrence with their volunteer efforts. Joanne served in Governor Joan Finney’s cabinet as Secretary of the Department on Aging and Ron retired after many years with The University of Kansas.

Honored Guests from Jefferson County Elsa and Herb Edmonds are a musically-gifted couple from McLouth who
Blue Hawaii

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are volunteers in their church and many civic groups. Elsa is a retired teacher and librarian and Herb has been a farmer, real estate agent and oil land man.

For the last ten years, JAAA has used the dance to raise money for its Guardian Angel Fund which helps seniors with critical needs that cannot be met with other funds. Guardian Angel has been a real blessing to desperate seniors with no other place to turn.

Over the years, the dance has evolved and in recent years a silent auction was added of items donated by individuals and companies who support the mission of Guardian Angel Fund.

Aboud's Catering and Great Overland Station have been with JAAA every single dance. The venue was perfect and the food indescribably delicious. Many attendees haven't missed a dance and our honorary chairs and honored guests have made us proud. Our first honorary chairs were the late Marge and Barney Heeney who took the dance floor by storm with Marge in a beanie topped with a propeller. Even when Barney could no longer attend, Marge would try to put in an appearance, often sharing a dance with the late Jerry Wittmer.

JAAA staff members consistently did a marvelous job handling the auction and this year introduced a very popular wine toss similar to a carnival game. While all of the staff contributed to the success of the dance, some deserve special mention: Nyree Green-Brooks, Susan Harris, Jocelyn Lyons, April Maddox, Jean Stueve and Sharon Wright.

Perhaps the best memories of the dance are of the people, young and old, who crowded the dance floor, often three generations of the same family dancing side by side. Indeed,

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If someone told you that you could save thousands of dollars just by checking your Medicare Part D insurance to be sure you are in the best plan for you, would you believe them? It’s true. While it is unlikely you’ll save thousands, some have. In 2015, JAAA saved one individual an astounding $14,586. While that is an extremely rare occurrence, last year SHICK volunteers saved the 857 people for whom they had previous information an average of $1,124.14 per person.

Each year, the number of senior taking advantage of the free SHICK service increases. Last year JAAA’s SHICK volunteers contributed 150 hours and served 2,076 seniors during the open enrollment period from October 15 to December 7. Those are the same dates this year for Part D open enrollment and also for Medicare Advantage plans.

Simply call JAAA at 235-1367 or 1-800-798-1366 (outside Topeka) to schedule an appointment during business hours. In Lawrence, you may receive help from the Senior Resource Center of Douglas County by calling 842-0543. Last year, JAAA was able to offer evening and Saturday appointments, but it is presently unclear whether funding will be available for afterhours appointments.

Additional financial assistance is available for low income seniors. The maximum income limit for singles is $1,508 monthly income and less than $12,320 in savings; for couples, the amounts are $2030 monthly income and less than $24,600 in savings.

Susan Harris, JAAA Executive Director, encourages seniors to check to see if they are in the best plan for them and also encourages low-income seniors to see if they might qualify for extra assistance. “There are different levels of help based on where a person falls in regard to income and assets. This subsidy helps pay premiums, copayments, and deductibles associated with drug costs,” she explains. “We always encourage people who think they may be eligible to get in touch with us to help them apply as there are two different ways to get this help, one through Social Security and one through the State of Kansas. Folks on the very low income side can apply through the state to also get help with their Part A and B premiums, copays and deductibles in addition to help with their drug program (a program called MSP Medicare Savings Program). Our counselors will know which application process is going to most benefit the consumer and help them apply.”
Norma Evans, 102, dances with her friend Bev Meredith-Roe while Elvis (aka Bob Lockwood of McLouth) sings at the monthly meeting of Perry Senior Citizens. Norma and her late husband Mike had a reputation for wearing out dance floors. “We just loved to dance,” says Norma with a smile. The couple had been married just a couple weeks shy of 77 years when Mike died in 2015 at the age of 100. Look for a story about Perry Senior Citizens in the next issue of Amazing Aging. Photo by Lillian Lockwood.

JAAA gets around! 
Look for us!

Medicare Monday, we’ll answer your Medicare questions, Topeka Public Library, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
August 8    September 11    October 2

Medicare Quarterly Evening, Topeka Public Library, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. on September 14.

Grey Wolves in Meriden, Meriden United Methodist Church, third Thursday of each month, 11:00 a.m. for Jefferson County seniors: meal, fellowship, presentation.
August 15    September 19    October 17

TACC (Topeka Area Continuity of Care) Resource Fair, Fairlawn Plaza Mall, 9:00am to Noon on October 19

CHAMPSS Orientation Sessions
Lawrence: Lawrence Public Library, first Monday of each month at 2:00 p.m.
August 7    September 11    October 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.
August 2    September 6    October 4

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

JAAA will be closed all day on Labor Day, Monday, September 4
You may contact us at 235-1367 (Topeka); 1-800-798-1366 (outside Topeka)
Bob Fulton is an active participant in WU Moves Community Wellness Program at Washburn University. He is quick to share that he once weighed 280 pounds and now weighs 229. But Dr. Park Lockwood, PhD, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator for the WU Moves Program, says Bob had already lost some of the weight before he began the program. “He’s lost about 30 pounds during his time with us.”

Bob is a gregarious gentleman who likely never met a stranger nor made an enemy. He worked many jobs in both Topeka and Lawrence and was always very active, very busy. He and his lady, Mary Corcoran, began the program together.

Mary is a native of Long Island, New York, who was transplanted to Georgia and moved to Topeka 11 years ago because of Hurricane Katrina. She does not have a weight problem, but says she had double heart bypass surgery in 1997 where “they took the veins from my leg and put them up there.” She is confident that “the program has helped me because it keeps me going.”

Sylvia Vaughn is attractive, fit and carries herself as if she were previously a model; instead she says, “I worked for the State of Kansas in the revenue service.” She works diligently on the exercise equipment because she wants to stay fit. “We enjoy the program,” she says with a smile.

One of the hardest workers in the class is Larry Wynne who suffered a stroke a couple of years ago which affected his left side. During his working years, he worked at Boys’ Industrial School, nursing homes, a restaurant, Kansas Neurological Institute and Menninger’s. He drove a handicapped bus for the school district and retired from the state.

His fondest desire is to “get out of this wheelchair. I’ve been doing pretty good. I do everything at home by myself, except for cooking and washing my own clothes, but as far as taking a bath or shower, I do that myself. I do everything because I don’t want to depend on people, so I just do it myself.”

Park Lockwood is proud of all the participants, but he singles Larry out: “The first time we helped Larry stand and we helped him balance. Then Larry got this idea that he could pull himself up and now he pulls himself up and stands for not his original 20 shaky seconds, but for one minute and thirty-five solid seconds today, a new record.”

Nancy Babcock does not allow a heavily wrapped arm to keep her off the stationary bike which is her favorite aerobic exercise equipment. “I hurt my elbow, yanked all the muscles out. I like the bicycle. First I could just do just a little bit, now I’m up to 22 minutes. I also work on balance.”

Nancy learned about the program from her senior center. Before retirement, she spent 10 years as a school lunch lady. “I fed the kids. We had four or five hundred kids.”

Lockwood is assisted by Tanna Terry and KayLee Farmer who serve as Wellness Assistants, and intern Meaghan Reed.

Graphic shows participants in WU Moves the ups and downs of the three-month assessment.
who leads the Yoga Group. Park Lockwood is especially pleased to have Tanna Terry as an assistant because she has a degree in Kinesiology from K-State and is presently a nursing student at Washburn. “We were hoping to find someone who had those two skills,” he says. Kinesiology is described as “the academic discipline which involves the study of physical activity and its impact on health, society, and quality of life.”

He says the program actually began in Lawrence when his wife was employed with Health Care Access and mentioned that they’d like to start a preventive health program. He developed a model and successfully applied for a grant with Topeka Foundation. When the program moved to Washburn in the Fall of 2016, they received a $10,000 internal grant which bought some needed equipment and is used to pay the student workers.

Because the program is free of charge, Washburn Moves Community Wellness Program still relies on grant money to continue.

There are about 70 people enrolled in the program’s three groups — East Topeka, Weight Management and Yoga — or who come in for individual appointments. Objective data is kept in three month, six month and one year assessments and is shared with the participants. In the last three month assessment, Lockwood is happy to report that the objective data he collects proves that “everything that should be going up (good cholesterol, oxygen uptake, endurance, functional strength) is going up and everything that should be going down (blood pressure, glucose, resting heart rate, weight, body mass index) is going down in numbers better than I expected.”

The program currently has a waiting list. Should you wish to add your name to it, please call Washburn’s Kinesiology Department at 785-670-1459.
Thank you for supporting

**JAAA’s Guardian Angel Fund**

Our Guardian Angel Fund was established to enable us to purchase needed items for our clients who encounter gaps in Medicare and Medicaid coverage. Your contribution to this fund makes you someone’s guardian angel.

*Our Heartfelt Thanks to our Generous Donors*

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Jocelyn Lyons  
Mango Tan  
Kim McGee  
Nancy McCune  
Merchants Pub and Plate  
Chris Merriweather  
MHG Ink Communications  
Molly Brown House Museum  
Napa Auto Parts of St. Mary’s  
Oakley Place  
Omaha Storm Chasers  
Painted Kansas  
Paisono’s  
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Panera Bread  
Paradise Park  
Catherine & Royce Parsons  
Philbrook Museum of Art  
Phoenix Furniture and Home Goods  
Picaboo  
Pizza Machine  
Polo Custom Products  
Potwin Pottery  
Prairie Band Casino and Resort  
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Sam Noble Museum  
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Steven Brennan Photography  
Stiefel Theatre  
Jean Stueve  
Tanganyika Wildlife Park  
The 1886 Crescent Hotel and Spa  
The Burger Stand  
The Coterie  
The Great Passion Play  
The Green, Richardson, Doty, Badger Families  
Grace Reichle  
The 1886 Crescent Hotel and Spa  
The Mad Greek  
The National Museum of Toys/Miniatures  
The National WWI Museum  
The Oread  
The Track  
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Topeka Civic Theatre  
Topeka RoadRunners  
Topeka Zoo and Friends of the Topeka Zoo  
Tubing and Adventures  
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Tulsa Zoo  
Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge  
Union Station  
United Health Care  
Upstream Brewing Company  
Brittney Vogel  
Walmart  
Waxman Candles  
WheatFields Bakery Café  
Tamara and Blake Wilson  
Windsor Place At Home Care  
David and Sharon Wright  

Bold text denotes higher level of giving