

LivingWell

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Director's corner

I've been saying, "How can it be 2011?" Colleagues and friends are shaking their heads and confirming their disbelief as well. Remember Y2K? Wasn't that just a couple of years ago? For most of us, time moves by faster each year, so it's important to pause for thought.



In the past few months, I've had the delightful pleasure of reading and listening to grateful messages sent to me praising the work of Aging Partners staff. It's clear that when we help people with what seem like insurmountable problems, the relief is so clear in their appreciative messages. And it's not always an insurmountable problem. It can be a listening ear, a kind demeanor or an unhurried conversation.

If we are fortunate, we spend our working lives doing something that gives us satisfaction as well as a paycheck. Each Aging Partners staff member can share stories of situations that were difficult, sad or didn't have a happy ending. But if asked, they will eagerly tell you of a recent experience that was so rewarding that the story just bubbles out as they speak.

My wish for all of us as we begin this New Year is to look for a way to have those helping experiences that fill your heart and make you glad for the day. 

June Pederson, Director, Aging Partners

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On the cover

Liz Merey helps people find energy and balance through yoga.

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This publication's purpose is to educate and inform persons on topics, programs, issues and activities that are of concern to the mature population, their families and community organizations. Specific emphasis is on articles pertaining to the services of Aging Partners. Contents may be reproduced with credit to the magazine.

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Keeping up with the Norrises

Although they are in their 70s, Richard and Norma Norris regularly look forward to playtime—with their grandchildren that is. That's why the couple stays healthy by exercising at the Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center, 233 S. 10th St.

"It's a real joy to get down on the floor and play with my grandchildren," Norma said. "I don't think I could do that if I didn't stay fit by exercising."

Happily married 52 years, the couple enjoys spending quality time with their five daughters, 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild, especially during the holidays. They also stay involved in the community, which they credit to exercising.

"The more you exercise, the more you feel like doing physical things," Norma said. "You just feel good after you have been at the Health & Fitness Center."

When she's not tending to her yard with a push reel lawn mower or performing other projects, Norma works part time at a local Catholic church. Richard volunteers with the Nebraska National Guard's family prescription program and works as a University of Nebraska-Lincoln football ticket taker, a pastime he's done since 1971. Although Richard retired 13 years ago as the Nebraska State Employees Credit Union president, he still has a number of physical activities that keep him busy.

"While I can't run a marathon, exercising at the Health & Fitness Center does help with my day-to-day activities," he said. "I'm almost 75

and still harvest apples and pears each fall, hand dig our garden and clean out my gutters."

For the past three years, the Norrises have exercised at the Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center. Richard joined the center upon a doctor's recommendation, as he suffered from joint-related pain, sleep apnea and emphysema. Not to be outdone, Norma also decided to come along.

"He can't have all the fun," she said.

After their first visit, staff members helped build programs for them based upon their exercise needs and limitations.

"The staff is extremely helpful and knowledgeable," Norma said.


During their one-hour visit, Richard and Norma perform circuit

training and work out on a number of cardiovascular machines. Norma works out on several pieces of balancing equipment as well. The Norrises noted their programs have been beneficial.

"It helps you stay strong," Richard said. "You don't realize how much your muscles can atrophy due to inactivity."

While exercising enables them to stay active, they also enjoy its social aspect.

"You get to meet a lot of nice people," Norma said. "Plus, visiting with others makes your workouts go faster."

The Health & Fitness Center is open weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 402-441-7575 for more information. 



Richard and Norma Norris remain active with the help of the Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center.



Micah Fulmer holds a photo of himself taken just one day after his May 4, 2008, accident.



Thanks to Lancaster County Public Rural Transit's services, Micah Fulmer sits at a café and reads a copy of J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye" – a book that Quality Living Inc. staff members quizzed him on during his neurological and orthopedic rehabilitation to test his memory.

Lancaster County Public Rural Transit gives Micah more independence

Thirty-six-year-old Micah Fulmer can't recall the night that changed his life. His scar-ridden legs, however, serve as a constant reminder.

It was 1 a.m. on May 4, 2008, as Micah and his friends, Jeff Gannon and Dr. Colin Gibson, worked to free a car from a dark roadside ditch near Micah's West A Street residence. As the tow-truck driver hooked up the car, Micah stepped around the vehicle to see if he could assist. Momentarily pausing in the road, Micah was struck from behind by a vehicle traveling around 55 mph. The impact snapped Micah's legs beneath his knees, opened his head against the windshield and sent him skyward. His body, tattered and torn, then crashed against the asphalt.

Micah's death seemed inevitable as his neighbors, Dr. Gibson and Gannon, a one-time Lincoln Fire Department paramedic, struggled to keep him alive.

The Southwest Rural Fire Department quickly arrived on the scene and transported Micah to BryanLGH Medical Center where he spent 18 weeks in its Intensive Care

Unit—coding six times during his first six weeks.

Starting on the road to recovery, Micah was transferred to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital so he could undergo rehabilitation. To receive special neurological treatment, Micah then resided 11 months at Omaha's Quality Living Inc., where he worked to regain his mental faculties. After spending nearly 24 months in hospitals and undergoing 31 surgeries, it was time for Micah to go home.

Micah wanted to get out in the public and regain some sense of normalcy. His parents manipulated their work schedules to drive him around. Soon he wanted more independence for all of them and began searching for more options. Since he lives outside of the Lincoln city limits, city bus service was not available. Micah was thrilled to discover Lancaster County Public Rural Transit.

"Besides the Lord and the doctors saving my life, Rural Transit played a part in my recovery," Micah said. "It meant everything to me. It opened a door for me to go out


in public and operate my own life without assistance from friends or family."

Micah uses the transit service to travel to doctor's appointments, as well as to the YMCA to work out. It also enables him to visit SouthPointe Pavilions, Sheldon Museum of Art and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he is working toward his master's in business administration.

"It broadened my horizons," Micah said.

He noted many rural residents believe they don't have transportation options. But there is an option, he said. It's Lancaster County Public Rural Transit.

"It's a good organization for people in need of transportation assistance," he said. "It changed my life!"

For more information on Lancaster County Public Rural Transit, call 402-441-7031. 

Singing the Blues

Yes, I'm singing the blues. But, it's not a tune of woe, but a tune of WOW for that special fruit which is in season and at its lowest price – the blueberry!

Native to North America, blueberries grow throughout the woods and mountainous regions of the United States and Canada. It is rarely found growing in Europe and has only recently been introduced in Australia.

Approximately 30 different species of blueberries exist, with different types growing throughout various regions. For example, the Highbush variety can be found throughout the Eastern seaboard from Maine to Florida; the Lowbush variety throughout the Northeast and Eastern Canada; and the Evergreen variety throughout states in the Pacific Northwest. Not cultivated until the beginning of the 20th century, blueberries became commercially available in 1916.

Did you know:

- Only 80 fat-free calories per cup, blueberries are a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin C and manganese.
- Blueberries rank high in antioxidants that help protect against cancer, heart disease and other age-related diseases. Processed berries have little to none of these chemicals, so fresh or frozen are best.



Easy Cobbler


- ½ stick margarine or butter melted
- 1 cup flour
- 1 ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 1/3 cup water
- ½ cup sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Pour melted margarine into shallow 1 ½ quart baking dish. You don't have to do this if you melted your margarine in the dish. In a mixing bowl combine flour, baking powder, salt, sugar and milk. Pour evenly over the melted margarine. In a bowl combine berries, water and sugar. Spoon evenly over batter but do not stir. Bake 40 to 45 minutes until the batter rises to the top.

- Researchers have found compounds in blueberries that help prevent urinary tract infection.
- Just one-half cup of blueberries helps meet the recommended five to nine servings a day of colorful fruit or vegetables.

How to buy blueberries:

- Though most plentiful during the summer, blueberries can be found in the market year-round, along with frozen, canned and dried blueberries.
- When purchasing fresh blueberries, look for firm, plump, dry berries with smooth skins and a silvery sheen. Size doesn't matter, but color does—reddish berries aren't ripe, but can be used in cooking. Avoid soft or shriveled fruit, or any signs of mold. Containers with juice stains indicate that the fruit may be bruised.

Refrigerate fresh blueberries as soon as you get them home, in their original plastic pack or in a covered bowl or storage container. Wash berries just before use, and use within 10 days of purchase. 

Submitted by Denise Boyd, Division Administrator for Aging Partners




Berries!

Ain't it the berries?" is: 1) a statement of annoyance for some, or, 2) recent nutrition advice. If you said both, you are right.

The amazing fact is the nutrition punch that berries and related fruits add to our diets. Many of the phytochemicals found in berries are nutritional positives, including anthocyanins (that blue-purple color so rare and so wonderful), ellagic acid, polyphenols and fiber.

Berries include the typical suspects—blueberries, raspberries (red, black, yellow), blackberries, cherries, strawberries and the lesser known lingonberries, chokeberries, gooseberries, cranberries, huckleberries, currants (red and black) and serviceberries. Berries can be found fresh, frozen, canned and dried. While you may only think of the fresh fruit and its out-of-season prices, think again.

The serving size is small— $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fresh fruit to reap the nutritional bonanza. Think of ways to add this punch to your menus and personal diet. Add the fresh or dried fruits to your tossed salads for good eats and good nutrition made easy. 

National Nutrition Month


It's March, and maybe you're thinking about St. Patrick's Day parties, the time change or something to do for April Fool's day. Did you happen to know that March is also "National Nutrition Month"?®

Sponsored by the American Dietetic Association, the 2011 annual event's theme is "Eat Right with Color." The Produce for a Better Health Foundation puts this theme into action with the following advice:

How to create a rainbow on your plate:

- Make a tropical rainbow fruit salad with fruits of each color: oranges, pink grapefruit, mango, papaya, kiwifruit, bananas and purple grapes.
- Saute your own medley of mixed vegetables using each color: red onions, carrots, corn, jicama, broccoli and black beans.
- Try a spinach salad with dried cranberries, canned mandarin oranges and red onion with your favorite vinaigrette.
- Make fruit-sicles: Puree your favorite fruit, such as melon, peaches, banana, and/or berries with 100 percent fruit juice. Freeze in ice cube trays, paper cups or popsicle molds for a refreshing treat. Use fresh, frozen or canned fruit.
- Make a refreshing beverage using 100 percent juice and iced tea.

- Roast a whole head of garlic to make a delicious spread for an appetizer or on sandwiches.
- Steam edamame for a fun snack.
- Make a Greek-inspired salad: romaine lettuce, tomatoes, red onion, chick peas, black olives and artichoke hearts.
- Make confetti coleslaw: shredded green and red cabbage, grated carrots, julienned kohlrabi and finely chopped red and yellow peppers.
- Make a Mexican pizza with tortillas, refried beans, salsa and grated low fat jalapeno cheese; bake.
- Check out the unique combinations of veggies in the frozen section to build a meal—a quick stir-fry, vegetable soup or stew, or a frittata.
- Make a dried fruit and nut mix for snacks. They make great gifts, too. Include dried apples, apricots, cranberries, peaches, pears, cherries and mixed nuts.
- Pizza for breakfast? Sure! Top a toasted English muffin with tomato sauce, a scrambled egg and fresh spinach. Add grated mozzarella and melt.

Make many rainbows this March to celebrate Nutrition Month. But remember it's colored food, not brightly hued candies that count! 

Pasta-bilities

For generations, pasta has been a part of family traditions from weeknight meals to holiday feasts. From hearty lasagna to delicate pasta salad, the recipe possibilities are endless.

Today, busy folks continue to search for foods that are healthy, satisfying and economical—and they do not need to look further than the pasta aisle. Pasta is very low in sodium and non-egg varieties are cholesterol-free. Per cup, enriched pastas provide an excellent source of folic acid and a good source of other essential nutrients, including iron and several B-vitamins.

In response to dietary guidance urging Americans to include more whole grains in their diets, manufacturers have introduced nutritionally enhanced pasta varieties such as whole wheat, whole


grain pasta fortified with omega-3 fatty acids and additional fiber. Some varieties of whole grain pasta can provide up to 25 percent of daily fiber requirements in every one cup portion.

Unlike traditional pastas made of refined durum wheat, or semolina, whole-grain noodles don't lose their bran and germ during processing. Bran, the outer skin of a whole grain, and the germ, or embryo of the grain, carry considerable healthful fats, protein, antioxidants, B vitamins, minerals and fiber. One of these minerals, magnesium, increases the body's sensitivity to insulin, which may help to lower the risk of diabetes. And dietary vitamin E, folate, and fiber may reduce the risk of



heart disease. High-fiber diets may also drive down harmful glucose, insulin, and fat levels in the blood.

To fix an easy gourmet meal, toss cooked whole grain pasta with olive oil, Italian seasoning and salt for a quick and healthy dish. For a full main dish, add a cup of cooked vegetables such as: chopped broccoli, sliced zucchini, snap peas, chopped asparagus or other favorite veggies. Add grilled chicken for a meal in one.

You can't be perfect but you can add some perfectly good pasta menus to your meal plans. 

Orange You Happy

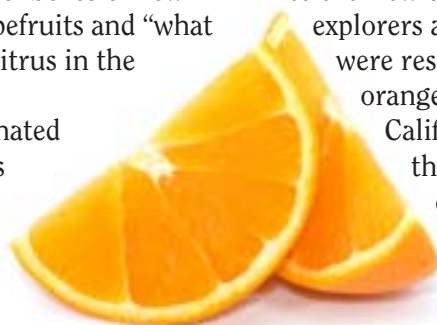
One can tell—or maybe it's only dietitians and other foodies who tell—the time of the year by what food is in season.

Finished with cranberries, it must be that “orange you happy time.” You can tell it's citrus time by the mountains of boxes of new crop oranges, grapefruits and “what the heck is that” citrus in the grocery store.


Oranges originated thousands of years ago in Asia, in the region of southern China and Indonesia before spreading to

India and the Middle East. They were introduced into Europe around the 15th century.

Orange trees began to be grown in the Caribbean Islands after Christopher Columbus brought the seeds there on his second voyage to the New World. Spanish explorers and missionaries were responsible for bringing oranges to Florida and California, beginning the cultivation of this citrus fruit in the two states widely known for their oranges.



Before the 20th century, oranges were very expensive and not regularly consumed, but eaten on such special holidays as Christmas. After more efficient means of transportation were developed, the price of oranges dropped and oranges became consumed on a wider scale.

All citrus fruits are excellent sources of vitamin C and good sources of fiber, folate, thiamine and potassium. Bonus nutritional points can be found by eating such brighter hued fruits such as cara cara oranges, pink grapefruit and blood oranges. 

Time to Prepare for Homestead Exemption

A new year is upon us, which means it's time to begin thinking about reapplying for Homestead Exemption.

The Nebraska Homestead Exemption makes it possible for those who fit the eligibility requirements to receive exemption of some, or all, of their property taxes.

Houston Doan, Insurance and Financial Counselor, said it's important to understand a Homestead Exemption is based on an adjusted income amount.


"You may actually be eligible for some property tax relief even though your income may be higher than what the guidelines indicate," he said.

The adjusted gross income figure allows older adults to deduct expenses such as medical transportation; medical insurance, including Medicare Part B premiums; and long-term care insurance premiums.

"If you're close to the guidelines for 2011, it's important to take the time and really do the paperwork," Doan said.

Without Homestead Exemption, Arlen Skinner wouldn't be able to afford the property taxes on the home he's owned in Crete for more than 20 years.

"If it wasn't for the help, I'd probably have to sell my house," he said. "I'm grateful for a program like this, because I enjoy the freedom of living in my own home."

Aging Partners provides assistance for individuals who have questions or need help filling out Homestead Exemption forms. Assistance typically begins in March, and the last day to file Homestead Exemption forms is in June. 

"I'm grateful for a program like this, because I enjoy the freedom of living in my own home."

– Arlen Skinner



Thanks to help from Homestead Exemption the last three years, Arlen Skinner receives assistance paying property taxes on his home in Crete.

Aging Partners News and Events

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When you receive *Living Well* magazine by e-mail, you have direct access to many services. Click your mouse on any website listed and you are linked directly to a service or advertiser's website. Some will let you e-mail questions about the provider services. There are wonderful stories in every issue of *Living Well*. By visiting the Aging Partners website, you will find current and past issues. Feel free to print out the whole magazine or just the pages that interest you. Call Deb Baines at 402-441-6146 or e-mail her at dbaines@lincoln.ne.gov to sign up.



Health and Wellness

Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center

Monday through Friday
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

233 S. 10th St., Suite 101

A certified personal trainer is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., or by appointment. \$10 suggested monthly donation for 60+; \$15 for 60 and under.

Senior Health Promotion Center

Free services available to people 60 years and older include comprehensive foot care, ear care, blood pressure and blood glucose checks, Sahara Bone Density screenings and health education.

The clinic is open on the lower level of the Downtown Center on most Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call 402-441-7575 for information. Contributions accepted.

Free Nutrition Consultations

Do you have questions about how to adjust your diet for sodium, saturated fat, calories, carbohydrates, whole grains, omega-3 fatty acids or fiber? Free nutrition consultations are offered by our registered dietitian Tuesdays 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. and Thursdays 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. at 233 S. 10th St., Suite 101. Call for an appointment at 402-441-7575.

Educational

Bob Ross Oil Painting Classes

Paint along with certified instructor Donald R. Belik in this one-day painting class for painters of all abilities. Students will enjoy fun and sure-fire results. All materials and supplies are provided. Classes are on Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Northeast Center, 6310 Platte Ave. Call 402-441-7158 for reservations. \$50 fee per class must be pre-paid. Scholarships are no longer available.

- Sat., Jan. 8 - Teton Winters
- Sat., Feb. 5 - Water Lily

Free Senior Computer Education Classes from Community Action Partnership & Aging Partners

Computer Classroom, 210 "O" St., lower level
Learn how to: Explore the Internet, send and receive e-mail and become an active participant in the computer age. Class size is limited to 14 students. A brief one-time 30-minute orientation is required before attending classes. Call

402-441-7158 to register.

Participants must meet income eligibility guidelines.

- **Class 1: Keyboarding**

Wed., Jan. 26, 8 a.m. - noon
Learn the basics of computer typing and how to use the keyboard.

- **Class 2: Microsoft Windows XP**

Wed., Feb. 9, 8 a.m. - noon
Introduction to Windows and the computer. Opening, closing, re-sizing and exploring Windows. Creating, saving, copying, deleting and moving files and folders.

- **Class 3: E-mail and the Internet**

Wed., Feb. 23, 8 a.m. - noon
Learn how to search for information on the Internet, as well as how to set up and use an e-mail account.

Income Tax Time is coming.

Monday through Thursday,
Feb. 1 - April 14, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Downtown Center

We welcome back AARP tax consultants in February.

Appointments for free assistance will be available through mid April.

Please bring your photo ID, Social Security card, wage and earnings statements (W2s), interest and dividend statements (Form 1099), a copy of last year's return and any other information about your income and expenses. Call 402-441-7158 to make your appointment. See www.irs.gov for tax information and to check on your refund status.



Entertainment

January Lunch Club: The Music of the Greatest Generation, Featuring the vocals of Anne Bremer

Join us for a catered luncheon and entertainment from songbird Anne Bremer, as she takes us on a nostalgic musical journey back to the unforgettable musical sounds of the 1940s.

- Sat., Jan. 22, Downtown Center, 1005 O St. Dinner at 11:30 a.m., 60-plus suggested contribution is \$3. Show at 12:30 p.m., tickets \$3. For reservations, call 402-441-7154 by Thurs., Jan. 20.
- Sat., Jan. 29, Northeast Center, 6310 Platte Ave. Dinner at 11:30 a.m., 60-plus suggested contribution is \$3. Show at 12:30 p.m., tickets \$3. For reservations, call 402-441-7151 by Thurs., Jan. 27.

Dinner & Show Series

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- Dinner at 5:30 p.m.
Show at 6:30 p.m.
\$8 for those 55-plus, \$9 for people under 55 (tax included). Van transportation an additional \$2.
Show-only tickets: \$4.

Reservations and cancellations are due by 10 a.m. the Tuesday before the show by calling 402-441-7158. Payment due prior to the event. No refunds. Send payment to: Aging Partners, Attn: Dinner & Show, 1005 "O" St., Lincoln, NE 68508. Sponsored with Butherus, Maser & Love Funeral Home and in cooperation with Cotner Center Condominiums.

- ***The Lullaby of Broadway*, featuring "Broadway" Bill Lord**
Thurs., April 14
Join "Broadway" Bill Lord as he performs all your favorites, including such hits as: *Some Enchanted Evening* from

South Pacific; *Sunrise, Sunset* from *Fiddler on the Roof*; *You'll Never Walk Alone* from *Carousel*; *Climb Every Mountain* from *The Sound of Music*, and many more!

- ***Favorite Songs: The Hits of Dennis Morgan, featuring Elaine Peacock & Ralph Johnson***
Thurs., May 19

Dennis has written hit songs for the likes of Garth Brooks, Neil Diamond, Barbara Mandrell, Kenny Rogers, Ronnie Milsap, Charlie Pride, Tanya Tucker, Amy Grant, Rod Stewart, George Strait and dozens of others throughout the past 30 years. Join Elaine Peacock and Ralph Johnson as they play their favorite hits from the Dennis Morgan songbook. 

aging.lincoln.ne.gov

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Improve Balance, Prevent Falls with Tai Chi

Certified Instructor Tracie Foreman helps a class of older adults improve their balance through the practice of Tai Chi.

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries among older adults. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of three adults age 65 and older fall each year.

Maintaining balance is one of the easiest ways older adults can ensure they don't become a statistic. With three certified Tai Chi instructors, Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center offers the perfect solution.

Fundamentals of Tai Chi:

- Be centered.
- Relax, do not lock joints.
- Alignment—do not bend forward.
- Slow, continuous movement.
- Weight transfers from one leg to another.
- Do not over extend.
- Remember to breathe.

“We see every day how fitness can improve strength, balance and flexibility,” said Tracie Foreman, certified Tai Chi instructor, health educator and personal trainer. “The movements of Tai Chi create less stress on joints, making it a great fit for adults of all ages with muscular and joint issues.”


Originating centuries ago in China, Tai Chi is a shorter and less expansive version of martial arts. Slow, progressive movements elongate muscles to build core strength and improve balance. Tai Chi can also reduce anxiety and stress and make participants more aware of their stance.

“We’ve seen people who once used canes no longer using them,” Tracie said. “People who struggled with balance no longer have those issues.”

Certified Tai Chi Instructor Pat Talbott believes Aging Partners will see an increase in the popularity of its Tai Chi classes.

“I think the program will grow because it’s so user friendly,” she said. “As the word gets out, people are going to want to participate.”

Tai Chi classes last approximately one hour, including warm up and cool down. The next session will be held at Huntington Park Apartments, 4000 Huntington Ave., Jan. 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Enter through the door off of the north parking lot. Classes cost only \$2, and drop-ins are welcome. To hone Tai Chi skills at home, Aging Partners also offers DVDs for only \$5.

For more information, call Aging Partners Health & Fitness at 402-441-7575. 



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Open Enrollment for Medicare Advantage

According to Nick Trede, Department of Insurance
SHIIP program, if you are enrolled in a Medicare
Advantage plan, you're allowed to disenroll between
Jan. 1 and Feb. 14 of 2011 and switch to Original
Medicare. If you switch to Original Medicare during
this period, you have until Feb. 14 to join a Medicare
prescription drug plan. Your coverage will begin the
first day of the month following your enrollment.

If you have questions, please call
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MISSION

Aging Partners plans, coordinates and advocates for older people in our eight-county area. Our mission is to enhance daily living, expand personal choices and educate the community in an effort to ensure the independence and full life of the people we serve.

Being Well

NUTRITION

- **Nutrition Consultation** - Older adults receive assessments, intervention planning, counseling, follow-up and coordination with other service providers. 402-441-7159
- **Meals** - Noon meals, selected evening meals with entertainment, special holiday meals and light menu choices are available at some centers. 402-441-7159

HEALTH & FITNESS

- **Health & Fitness Center** - Exercise classes, fitness equipment and certified personal trainers. ▲ 402-441-7575
- **Senior Health Promotion Center** - University of Nebraska-Medical Center and Aging Partners provide health screenings. ▲ 402-441-6687

- **Caregiver Support Services** - Caregivers receive stress management, exercise, health and wellness assessments, and nutrition counseling. 402-441-7575
- **Fit to Care** - Free tips from a registered dietician and certified personal trainer to help decrease the effects of chronic tension.
- **Health Education Programs** - A variety of topics assisting individuals to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- **Health Screenings** - Screenings include blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, bone density and more.
- **Exercise** - At several locations; pilates, yoga, stretch and tone classes. Daily fitness programs on 5 City-TV, Channel 5. ▲
- **Alzheimer's Disease** - Information and referral. 402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938
- **Widowed Person Service** - Support for people who are widowed. ▲ 402-441-7026

Planning Ahead

FINANCIAL

- 402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938
- **Financial Counseling** - Information on Medicare, private insurance policies, reverse mortgages and counseling.
 - **Legal Counseling** - Free legal advice and referral services for those who meet financial guidelines.
 - **Medicare & Medicaid Fraud** - Seeks to reduce waste and fraud in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

SENIORS FOUNDATION

The charitable foundation that plans, advocates for, and supports the programs and services of Aging Partners. To contribute or volunteer, call 402-441-6179 or visit seniorsfoundation.org.

Staying Involved

VOLUNTEER!

- **RSVP/Retired & Senior Volunteer Program** - Volunteer experiences for those ages 55+. Coordination between community needs and the talents of volunteers. ▲ 402-441-7026
- **Foster Grandparent Program** ▲ 402-441-7026
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman** 402-441-7070
- **Senior Companion Program** 402-441-7026
- **Widowed Persons Service** ▲ 402-441-7026

SENIOR CENTERS

Social events and activities, health and educational programs. Noon meals, selected evening meals with entertainment, special holiday meals, brown bag and shelf-stable meals for at home. Transportation to the centers is available for a fee. Six centers in Lincoln and five in Lancaster County. ▲ 402-441-7158

EMPLOYMENT

- 402-441-7064 or 800-247-0938
- **OperationABLE** - Job searching for persons 50+. Works with employers who have job listings.





Living at Home

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938

- **Caregiver Support Groups** - Discuss issues and problems of caregiving with other caregivers.
- **Senior Companion Program** - Home-bound older adults receive companionship.
▲ 402-441-7070

LONG-TERM CARE OPTIONS/ CARE MANAGEMENT

402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938

- **Care Management Services**
- **SentryCare/Lifeline Emergency Response System** - 24-hour emergency access at the press of a button.
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman** - Protects the rights of residents in long-term care facilities.
- **Resident Services** - Service coordination to maintain the independence of those at Burke Plaza, Mahoney Manor and Crossroads House in Lincoln and in Geneva, Fillmore and Lancaster counties only.
- **Senior Care Options** - Long-term care and assessment for Medicaid-eligible persons seeking nursing home care.
- **Supportive Services Program** - Eligible older persons can receive assistance with the cost of in-home services and adult day care.
- **Medicaid Waiver Services** - State funded in-home services for those who are Medicaid-eligible who choose to live at home or use community-based services.
- **Harvest Project** - Mental health and substance abuse services for older adults.
▲ 402-441-7070

HOUSING & HOME REPAIRS

- **Home Handyman Service** - Minor home repairs and maintenance from mowing to leaky faucets, painting and broken light fixtures.
▲ 402-441-7030
- **Assisted Living and Nursing Facilities** - Listings are available at 402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938 or at aging.lincoln.ne.gov.
- **Subsidized and Independent Housing**

Shared Services

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Provides help for older adults and their caregivers to resolve questions and concerns about aging. Services include referrals, counseling, social work and care management. Start here to determine alternatives, and arrange services in the Aging Partners service area.
Call 402-441-7070 or 800-247-0938

TRANSPORTATION

- **Ride within Lincoln to the Centers**
▲ 402-441-7158
- **Lancaster County Public Rural Transit** - Scheduled transportation to and from Lincoln and rural Lancaster areas. Handicap accessible.
▲ 402-441-7031
- **Other options in the community** - Listings available at 402-441-7070

LIVING WELL MAGAZINE

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LIVE AND LEARN

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MULTI-COUNTY PROGRAMS

- Butler County Senior Services, Linda Vandenberg, 402-367-6131
- Fillmore County Senior Services, Brenda Motis, 402-759-4922
- Polk County Senior Services, Maureen Stearns, 402-764-8227
- Saline Eldercare, Amy Hansen 402-821-3330
- Saunders County Senior Services, Donna Ehrenberg, 402-318-1471
- Seward County Aging Services, Kathy Ruzicka, 402-761-3593
- York County Aging Services, Lori Byers, 402-362-7626

MULTI-COUNTY CARE MANAGEMENT

All Counties: 800-247-0938

**Aging Program Coordinator,
Donna Mulder**

- Butler County: Becky Romshek 402-367-4537
- Fillmore County: Rhonda Stokebrand 402-759-4922
- Polk County: Amy Theis 402-747-5731
- Saline County: Trudy Kubicek 402-826-2463
- Saunders County: Mary Dailey 402-443-1097
- Seward County: 800-247-0938
- York County: Nancy Hoblyn 402-362-7626

MULTI-COUNTY SENIOR CARE OPTIONS (SCO) & MEDICAID WAIVER

- Sue Kramer, Intake
- Avis Blase, Nancy Kohler & Wendy Hanshaw, Services Coordinators
- Ann Bussey, Sandy Oswald & Shirley Vickinovac, SCO Nurses 800-247-0938

aging.lincoln.ne.gov

Marilyn makes a difference

Aging Partners would not be the same without Marilyn Henry, a three-year volunteer and nearly 20-year employee.

“Marilyn is a godsend,” said Gladys Cooper, Information and Referral supervisor. “In addition to great people skills, she possesses a wealth of knowledge and experience. Plus, as a retiree, she can relate to all the issues and is always willing to lend a helping hand.”

Marilyn graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1973 with a degree in elementary education. While working toward her graduate degree in educational psychology, Marilyn performed her practicum at the Lincoln Area Agency on Aging. Upon graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a specialization in gerontology, Marilyn joined the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in 1979 as a social worker.

Rejoining the agency in 1983, Marilyn worked as a multi-county case manager and traveled approximately 1,000 miles a month within Lancaster and its surrounding counties to share program information at local senior centers and perform one-on-one home visitations. In 1993, Marilyn then moved to Burlington, Vt., where she worked part time for the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging distributing cold lunches to senior citizens via a vendor’s cart.

“I basically was a senior center on wheels,” she said.

A year later, Marilyn moved to the Englewood, Colo., area, where she managed an emergency assistance center for Catholic Charities. She returned to Lincoln in 1998 and rejoined the agency as an information counselor. As a counselor, Marilyn answered call-in questions, made referrals and decided if a case manager needed to be assigned to an individual or family.

Retiring in October 2007, Marilyn didn’t stay away long and soon began volunteering on Thursday mornings.

“I have a great deal of loyalty to the organization and people as they’ve been doing great work and have been good to me,” she said. “I think Aging Partners is essential to our community and its surrounding areas. A lot of people would fall through the cracks if we weren’t there to help them ... So, I just wanted to keep going.”

When Marilyn is not volunteering at Aging Partners or spending time with her three children, three grandchildren, and three great grandchildren, the North Platte native enjoys flower gardening, taking care of her two cats, attending a Monday book club at the Charles H. Gere Branch Library, and playing games of Scrabble with friends. She also recently underwent docent training at the Sheldon Museum of Art, in order to give tours to local fourth to sixth grade students. 

“I think Aging Partners is essential to our community and its surrounding areas.”

– Marilyn Henry



As a volunteer, Marilyn Henry assists visitors to Aging Partners each Thursday.

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LINCOLN'S MEMORY CARE LEADER SINCE 1996

Leola will be remembered

Leola Bullock died Oct. 17 at age 81 leaving behind positive marks throughout the community during six decades of living in Lincoln.

Leola grew up in Mississippi and moved to Lincoln in 1950 with her husband, Hugh. She found a community that, at the time, faced many of the similar prejudices she had seen in the South.


In the following decades, Leola worked for equality in the workplace, classroom and government. She was the first black sales clerk hired in Lincoln and addressed other concerns such as segregated lunch counters, bias in school textbooks and unequal treatment of students.

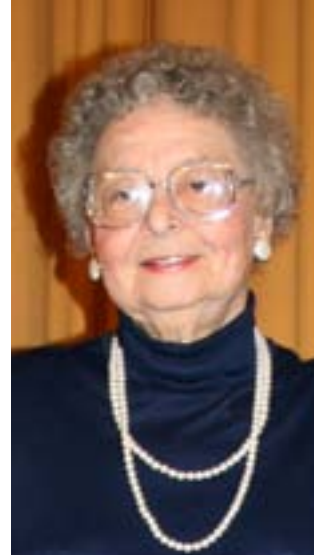
The woman, who many defined, according to the Lincoln Journal Star, as “unselfish, tenacious, unrelenting, caring and loving,”

helped found the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Rally and March, the annual Juneteenth celebration to bring diverse groups together across the community, and the Association of Black Citizens, which was instrumental in the establishment of the Lincoln Police Review Board.

Leola earned numerous awards and honors throughout her lifetime for her civil rights efforts.

Lincoln Public Schools established the Leola Bullock Multicultural Award in 1989 and awards it yearly.

While Leola acknowledged some limitations that came with getting older in a 2008 *Living Well* article, she stayed active in many organizations to continue promoting civil rights and equality up until her death. 



Leola Bullock

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Letter from the President

It is my pleasure to give you my quarterly update on the Seniors Foundation. We kicked off our Partner Campaign and the most up-to-date list of our partners can be seen in this newsletter. It's not too late to become a Partner! You can still join us by calling the Seniors Foundation office at 402-441-6179 for more information.

Please mark your calendar for May 13, so you can attend our luncheon at the Lincoln Country Club. We will be honoring seniors who have given back to their community. Our luncheon speakers will be Evonne and Bill William, who spearheaded the Heartland Honor Flights to Washington, DC in recognition of World War II Veterans. There will be good food, fun and lots of recognition for Lincoln Seniors. It will be Seniors Foundation's opportunity to showcase the reason we do what we do. This is an event you won't want to miss.

Even more exciting things are happening. Seniors Foundation was recently awarded an \$85,000 two-year New Freedom Grant that will allow the Foundation, in

collaboration with Easter Seals Nebraska, to expand the Lincoln Seniors Transportation program into Lancaster County. We need new volunteer drivers now more than ever as we expand the program. Please volunteer by calling Deb Hynek at 402-441-6143.

You'll be glad you did.

The One Campus project is moving forward. Look for Harold's story in this and future issues of our newsletter as he utilizes the various programs that the One Campus offers in order to stay in his rural home setting.

The Foundation has indeed been busy this past year. 2011 will be even more exciting as the work on the One Campus project continues to advance. What better way to celebrate our

30th year of supporting the programs and services of Aging Partners in order to enrich the lives of older adults in our community! This is a tall order. We need both your financial support and words of encouragement.

I wish you all the best of everything for the New Year.

Helen E. Griffin

Seniors Foundation Board President



Helen E. Griffin
*Seniors Foundation
Board President*

Celebrating
30
*Years of
Support
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Stay up-to-date on the happenings at the Seniors Foundation. You can join our facebook group by going to seniorsfoundation.org and clicking on the Facebook link. If you're already on Facebook, search Seniors Foundation. "Like" us to be a part of the conversation.

Over the past few issues, we have shared the story of Harold, a widower in his 70s, in a small Nebraska town served by a senior center.



Harold's Story

If you are a regular reader of *Epoch Voice*, you may recall our fictional friend Harold. A recent widower from a small town not far from Lincoln, the one-time capable and out-going farmer became lonely, worried, and anxious about his future after his wife Vera died. Harold's only child, a daughter, lived in Denver. She was apprehensive about his well-being, but was unable to do much beyond weekly phone calls and occasional visits.

As a regular at his local Senior Center, Harold was already connected to their services. They had linked him with home health providers, a visiting nurse who monitored his blood pressure, and help with cleaning each week so Harold was able to stay in his home.

More than providing services that allowed him to function independently, the Senior Center staff became his lifeline to happiness. The ready smiles and daily hugs kept him from feeling alone. When he had a legal issue while selling some farm equipment, the director took time to listen and connected him to a volunteer attorney who helped him through the transaction. When his eyes filled and his voice trembled at thoughts of Vera, she made

sure grief counselors saw him through the hurt.

It wasn't long before Harold was making new friends and connecting with old pals. Despite an arthritic knee, Harold joined in group exercises and dramatically increased his mobility. Before long he was participating in the Center's walking group. They were talking about joining in the Volkswalk in the next Cornhusker State Games.

Harold liked to joke that he couldn't boil water, which wasn't far from the truth. Vera had been the cook in the family, and a mighty fine one at that. Her homemade mac and cheese was something special. Harold knew he needed to do more for himself in the kitchen. He knew canned soup with ice cream for dessert wasn't healthy. His doctor was threatening to put him on cholesterol medication. Exercise was helping, but it wasn't enough.

Once again, the Senior Center came through with cooking lessons via satellite along with some one-on-one tutoring about recipes and shopping lists. The Center had

(continued on page 3)

Executive Director's Letter

Our fiscal year ended August 31, 2010 and we have been busy closing the books and sending information to the accountants to prepare our annual report to the IRS. Fiscal years are sometimes difficult to wrap our brains around. Most people think in terms of the calendar year which we have just closed. I also prefer to talk about the Foundation's work in those terms.

We are fortunate to have been awarded the support of the New Freedom Grant for the Lincoln Seniors Transportation Program. The need has been so large. The growth of the program has been so necessary. We have been working to bring this volunteer driver program to the greater Lancaster County area. What better way to do this than to work with an organization that has an entire division devoted to specialized transportation—Easter Seals Nebraska.

By the time you read this, our collaboration with Easter Seals Nebraska will have been set in an agreement to take this program beyond what Seniors Foundation staff can do. We are so pleased to be working with such a fine nonprofit organization that, like Seniors Foundation, can recognize the importance of affordable social transportation to the health and well-being of older adults as well as those with disabilities.

Seniors Foundation has also moved forward in working on the One Campus goal. We now have drawings that move us from the printed description to something more tangible. Specifically, Seniors Foundation has been working to identify locations for the campus. We have also been busy introducing the concept and renderings to individuals and organizations that share our mission and passion to support independence, with dignity, for older adults.

We are pleased to continue Harold's story in this newsletter. Harold will be with us for many years to help us understand how the campus can be used for not just those that live in Lincoln but for all those in the eight counties that Aging Partners serves. You will remember that Harold lives on a farm near a small rural community 90 minutes away from Lincoln and wants to be able to stay there. We hope you enjoy following Harold as he is introduced to the various tools provided by the One Campus. These tools will help him retain his independence and live where he chooses. That is what One Campus is all about—choice! Not just for local residents but for anyone who chooses to utilize what the campus offers along with their loved ones, no matter how far away they live.

Join us on this exciting adventure!



*Diane Rolfsmeyer,
Executive Director,
Seniors Foundation*

*For more
information about
how you can
impact the lives of
seniors now and in
the future, contact
Diane Rolfsmeyer,
Executive Director,
Seniors Foundation,
402.441.6179.*

Harold's Story (continued)

formed a men's cooking club and the men cooked lunch for the women once a month. It wasn't Vera's mac and cheese, but it sure was fun and no one went hungry.

How did all this happen for Harold? It boils down to a knowledgeable, caring staff that is able to make the right connections

for those in their care. In the future, seniors connected with a Senior Center might be living in a world where most of their needs could be handled through a computer and internet resources. But technology will never take the place of the human touch at the Senior Center.

Thank You, Partners!

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Tiny dancer creates a large life

By Valerie Crook

I've taken yoga classes from several instructors, but Liz's classes are amazing."

This is a common response to a question I posed to several women, as I prepared for this interview with longtime yoga instructor, Liz Merey.

'Amazing' is just an introduction to Liz. She has a dancer's graceful movement. She has a powerful presence. There's a serenity about her—she seems almost lighter than air.

Then come more pieces of her story: "Well, you know she danced on Broadway... And you know she danced in the movies..."

The early lessons

I asked Liz who played the most influential roles in her childhood. She was quick to credit her mother, in particular, but also her sisters,

"When we feel better, we think better." – Liz Merey

aunts and grandmother. All were women with exceptional manners and communication skills. They modeled how to talk to anyone with confidence and respect.

Her mother believed in positive criticism, leading Liz to look for solutions to life's challenges.

Liz's father was an artist at the Denver Art Museum. You can detect a sense of freedom and creativity in everything she does.

On the world's stage

You could say Liz Merey is a woman with a past.

It's a rich and magical past that put her at the center of the American and world cultural scenes for more than two decades.

And yes, the stories are true.

Liz left her home in Denver and headed off to study dance at Los Angeles City College in 1952. Before she could settle into school, she landed a job at the LA Civic Light Opera. She started teaching at dance studios in Hollywood. A friend introduced her to the famous choreographer Robert Alton. (Robert Alton was probably most famous for his work with Gene Kelley and Betty Grable.)

Liz danced in movies such as *There's No Business Like Show Business*, *Carousel*, and *Love Me Tender*. She worked with Mitzi Gaynor, Gordon McRae, Ethel Merman, Marilyn Monroe, Shirley Jones, Cameron Mitchell, Elvis Presley, Liberace and many others.

Liz taught and performed on the East Coast as well. During a particularly demanding period, she performed in clubs by night and awoke early to be at Radio City Music Hall in the mornings.

Liz met the jazz greats of the 50s and married jazz musician Johnny Rae. They traveled throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and Africa. While touring in Ethiopia with Herbie Mann, she met Haile Selassie at a cocktail party.

Introduction to Yoga

Back in San Francisco in the late '50s, she was working with Metropolitan Opera star Patrice Munsel. One of the dancers in Patrice's troupe introduced Liz to yoga 'poses.' Liz has continued her study of yoga with many teachers, most notably with Vishnu Devananda. She also has been a student and practitioner of meditation.

In 1960, she was teaching yoga privately. One client's husband owned the first gym in San Francisco. His wife wanted a gym for women, and Liz was asked to start the women's gym on the second floor above the men's. Around her, the city of San Francisco was undergoing a transformation, especially the Haight Ashbury district.

Liz witnessed many American cultural movements at their very inception. She cherishes the memories, and the opportunity to have met people the world over. Doors were opened for her and she had the courage to explore life on a stage more vast than most people dare to imagine.

But Liz does not live in the past. She spins its lessons into the present to help those with whom

she works today. She believes that your life trains you and you become more.

A new home

Liz was living in Los Angeles in the mid-'70s when the turmoil of the times pushed her to seek a safer home and good schools for her two children. Relatives living in Lincoln encouraged her to consider it. She likened Lincoln in the '70s to the Denver of her youth.

Yoga, teaching and the present

Seeing Liz in action is, yes, amazing. Her teaching skills are just as masterful.

Everyone comes to yoga with a different level of fitness and flexibility. Each person also comes with a unique set of goals. Liz meets each student exactly where they are—physically, emotionally and spiritually.

During the course of our daily lives, most people use only 12 muscles in the body on a regular basis. A series of yoga postures known as the Sun Salutation uses 250 muscles. Yoga makes it possible to engage the entire body in a manner that is at once challenging and relaxing.

One of the first benefits of yoga Liz notes is increased energy. By alternately tensing and releasing the muscles, one unlocks the body. She has witnessed students who started practicing yoga with an impaired range of motion improve their flexibility considerably over time.

Yoga also teaches its practitioners proper breathing. Most of us, especially when tense, take shallow breaths that do not adequately support the body and mind. During the practice of yoga, one is conscious of the breath and how it is incorporated into the movements. By learning to use

Continued on page 26.



Liz, center, dances in the movie Carousel.



From left, Liz's sister Jessie, Dennis Day and Liz perform on the Jack Benny Show.

Continued from page 25.

proper posture, the lungs are able to function much more efficiently.

While Liz is careful to teach proper form, she stresses that it is a process. Each person begins with what they are able to do and builds on it. In the practice of yoga, one gains flexibility. As muscles are trained to stretch and the lungs are trained to breathe, the body is better able to attain the desired posture.

For many, there is a spiritual side of yoga. It is up to each individual to determine. While it engages the body and mind, it also teaches one to focus on the moment.

Many of us are worrying about the future or the past and miss the only moment in which we can fully live—the present. By working to control one's racing thoughts and breathe properly, one is empowered to release stress, both in the body and mind.

Liz serves as a role model for the benefits of living in the moment. She has had the courage to trust the path that has unfolded for her. Even

her classes are all different, like snowflakes.

As she guides her students through the postures and breathing of yoga, she weaves in affirmations. As muscles release the tension of the day, the mind is encouraged to release its negative thoughts and worries. Several students noted that often during class, Liz touches on issues serendipitously meaningful to their personal lives. She seems to serve as a guide, helping students connect with their own consciousness and desires. This may simply be the gift of allowing oneself to be quiet and still. She recommends that each person find the time to do this daily.

Liz acknowledges the power of a positive attitude. For those who

may not have this gift, she notes the importance of positive intention. When body and mind work together in the moment to focus on positive intention, one can rise above the discouraging words and events of the day-to-day world.

As one of Liz's yoga classes unfolds, one becomes more aware of one's connections to life: the connection of all the cells in the body, the body's connection to the mind and its thoughts, the connection to one's fellow man, and the connections of the universe.

It's at once a tranquil and exhilarating experience.

Thoughts to inform your journey

Liz believes that everything in life happens for a reason. Life's challenges and barriers all bring lessons. Liz prefers to analyze the obstacles in her life and ask, "Why is this obstacle in my path? What can I learn from this?"

She observes that many people are limited by what they think they can't do. They may allow this to become an excuse for not trying to resolve their problem. Many people are also too self-critical or limited by an idea of what they think they should be. She believes that growth and learning happen when one constantly challenges one's belief system. She has seen students' joy in discovering they can do something they thought they couldn't.

Liz plans to continue to let her life open and unfold day to day. She is enjoying her journey and sharing its lessons with those around her. I am grateful to have been so touched. LW

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens." — Ecclesiastes 3:1

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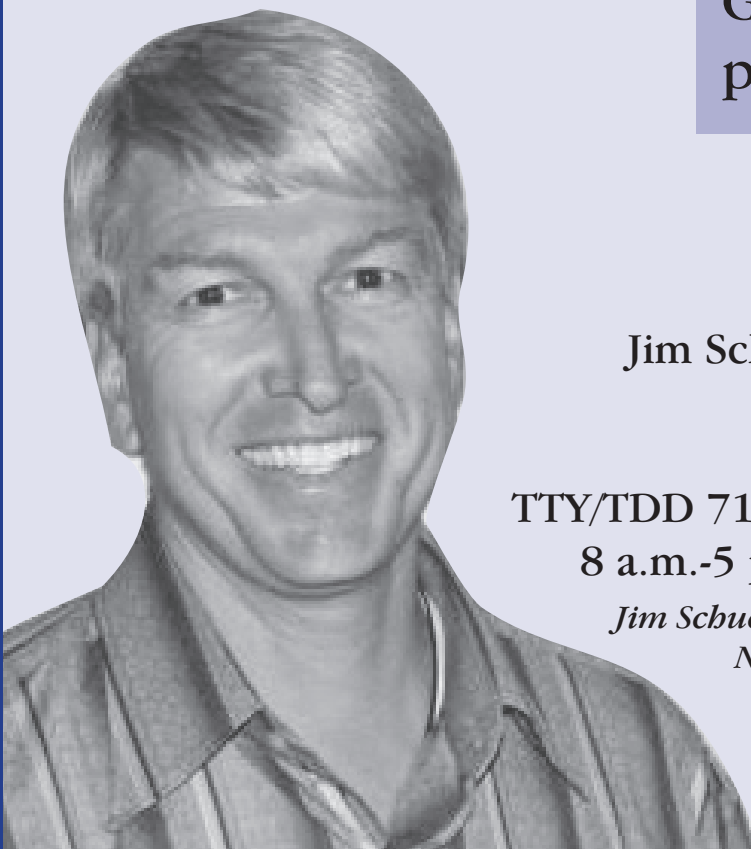
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Time changes everything

Part III in the series “An Accidental Course in Caregiving” by Dr. Debra Mullen, Associate Dean, College of Education & Human Sciences, University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

It was Christmas 1943, and as war-weary soldiers fought their way across the battlefields of Europe, Bing Crosby’s holiday carol struck deep into the hearts of anxious families and their homesick GI’s.

“I’ll be Home for Christmas” became an anthem and a dream for the young men who were huddled in foxholes, marching across snow-covered fields and navigating icy waters. It symbolized all that was good, stable and celebratory about family life and home.

As the war ended, our service men and women returned and began to create the images of those lyrics. They built homes, started families, and created the lives that had seemed so uncertain.

Days turned into weeks and weeks into years. Children grew up and the war heroes grew old. The home that had symbolized success, safety and family, the very place where dreams and infants were nurtured, quietly evolved into a place of risk. The stove that had prepared so many meals turned into a fire source for the sleeve of a nightgown. The rug covering the Kool-Aid stain became the site of a hip-breaking fall. The lovingly chosen and carefully maintained staircases, bathtubs and linoleum floors posed new hazards for age-weakened legs.

Leaving that home is likely to be one of the most difficult decisions we and our family members will ever face. In the same way that creating the home signaled new beginnings and future aspirations, moving out of it, distributing its contents and

turning it over to a new owner can mean something powerful is ending. Often the precipitating event is a medical crisis.

While family members frequently acknowledge that their loved one(s) shouldn’t be living on his/her own, rarely is the issue addressed until remaining at home is not a viable option. At that point the situation grows exponentially complex. Responding to the real and perceived needs of everyone involved takes time, diplomacy and patience. It can also require that family members do the seemingly impossible—put aside their own desires and focus on what is best for their loved ones and most fair to everyone involved.

While it is likely that every member of the family will have opinions and feelings about relocating elderly relatives, it’s important to remember that the individuals living in the home have the most at stake. It is their home, filled with items that represent their lives. They will be the ones to sleep in an unfamiliar place and cope with the demands of a new environment. In most cases they will live in considerably less space than they enjoyed in their home and have less personal freedom. Selecting the appropriate location is a matter of medical need, availability, cost and personal capacity. These are issues that must be honestly and completely examined.

Face Reality Objectively

The first hurdle is acknowledging that it is time to move. Ideally, but rarely, individuals

move before it becomes necessary. Good health, the capacity to enjoy new people and the ability to adjust to changing routines will make the transition much smoother.

In the case of my parents their move into a retirement community occurred following my father’s hip fracture and was going to be “just for a while.” Luckily, they were able to establish friendships, play cards and see the benefits of a housekeeper, prepared meals and an emergency call system before my mother’s health concerns became an issue. They lived in their new home for two years before my mother died.

As a widower, my father found consolation in his card playing group and the predictability of his daily life. He could speak about Mom to people who had known her. His grief was tremendous but it was eased by continuing to live in what had become a familiar place.

Most of our elders move because it is medically necessary or the family forces the issue. There is no easy way through this experience. As is the case of any loss, there is often anger, bargaining, and depression long before there is acceptance. Fortunately, there are steps any family can take to make this process less traumatic.

Make a Thorough Assessment

First, make a thorough assessment of the individual’s financial status. Knowing what he/she can pay, or what types of assistance are available, will refine the choices. In addition, having a trusted and ethical member of



the family appointed as Power of Attorney will assure that funds are spent in the best interest of the elderly individual. Consulting with one's family attorney and/or someone familiar with Medicare/Medicaid regulations can help guide this process.

Analyze Options

Second, determine the most appropriate circumstances for the individual. It becomes easy to overlook our elders' mental, emotional and spiritual needs. Well-meaning family members often consider moving Mom or Dad into their home. It may seem ideal, but our parents are not just parents. They need peers who share generational memories. They need to talk (and complain!) about us. They need to share their strength with others who are in similar situations. They need to exercise every inch of autonomy they still possess.

Fortunately, the landscape for today's seniors has changed dramatically in the last 15 years. Until recently, the primary option was a traditional nursing home. Moving into this environment meant sharing a small room with

another "patient," eating what was prepared and engaging in social activities planned by the staff. The benefit of this option was the 24 hour nursing care. While this option still exists, there are many others.

Retirement communities are the newest generation of elder housing. Designed for people over 55, these facilities include one and two bedroom apartments ranging in size from around 500 to more than 1,300 square feet. Amenities include once-a-week house cleaning, excellent meal choices, a personal alarm system and a long list of in-and out-of-community activities. The cost depends on apartment size with a small surcharge for the second resident.

Assisted living facilities resemble retirement communities but include nursing care. Residents usually have small apartments with minimal cooking facilities (small refrigerator and microwave) and social activities that are appropriate for those whose health does not permit extended out-of-facility activities. Nursing staff distribute medications and monitor health concerns.

Memory support units are facilities devoted to individuals with various forms of dementia. Bedrooms are usually small but shared living space is large. The philosophy behind this is to encourage residents to interact with one another and participate in planned activities. Many of these facilities are designed to make it difficult for a resident to get lost. Floor patterns and outdoor paths

are often circular or square so there is plenty of room to walk but not to end up in an isolated hallway.

It appears that more facilities are moving into a combination of the services described above. With the realization that many residents need increasing care, they are offering the option to start in an apartment, downsize into an assisted living unit and, if necessary move into a memory support area.

Climate Is Key

When looking at facilities a key question is climate. What will your loved one see each day? What kind of conversation will take place? How much privacy will they enjoy? Will those around them be as positive and upbeat as possible?

My sister and I visited several facilities several times before selecting one for Mom and Dad. We not only talked to the managers, we watched the staff and residents interact. We noted whether or not the staff knew the residents' names. We listened for laughter. We noted how or if staff responded to resident requests. We watched resident-to-resident interaction.

The place we chose was bright, clean, well-maintained and decorated for every season. Most of all, the staff and managers knew everyone's name and their preferences at meal times. They lingered at tables, offered a second cup of coffee and joked throughout the meal. The residents were friendly, outgoing and ready to help "new kids" adjust. This fit between

Continued on page 30.



Caregiver Corner

Continued from page 29.

our parents and the facility has been a source of comfort for all of us.

Do your homework

Third, learn the language of care facilities. Retirement communities charge an all-inclusive rate that will vary depending on the size of the apartment, number of residents and, sometimes location in the building. Rent is usually raised once a year.

All other facilities generally begin with a flat rate and then add charges based on the level of care needed by the individual. The most common term I have heard for these is "care points." A nurse or other medical provider will assess the needs of your family member and then determine the cost. In my experience the cost is based on level of interaction with nursing staff; the more assistance, the higher the fee. This cost is periodically re-assessed and usually raised.

Participating in the assessment is an important responsibility. Faced with the challenge of adjusting to a new environment, family members may lose some of their abilities or, even worse, the motivation to act.

On-going conversation between the person doing the assessment and you, the person who knows your loved one the best, can help prevent an inaccurate analysis of independence or skill.

The Big Move


Finally, prepare yourself for the move. Although it was my responsibility to make the process as smooth as possible, I could not help experiencing my own sense of loss. I have not lived with my parents for more than three decades. However, sorting through their and our belongings was a bittersweet journey through my own life. Deciding what to move to their apartment or keep in my home was difficult. The guiding principle for this process was keeping items that held the greatest practical and sentimental meaning. Handing the new owner the keys to my parents' home was one of the most difficult things I have ever done.

Caregiving: A new call to duty

In 1943 their sense of duty was as strong as their young bodies.



Some of them fought their way through horrific conditions. Others riveted together fighter planes, typed memos and tended victory gardens. Through the long days and nights of warfare they dreamed of home. Today many of our elderly face a different kind of battle. The arms that carried wounded comrades and later cuddled newborn children are not capable of meeting the tasks of daily living.

Today they need caregivers who can respond to a different "call to duty." They need us to be firmly gentle, ethical and sensitive. They need us to understand that what they are losing is more significant than recliners and beds. They need us to know that at its core, this transition remains an admission that life is circular and youthful prowess is finite. They need us to know that in their hearts they will always be home for Christmas...if only in their dreams. 

Caregiver Events

Create the Legacy –

Draw on your loved one's capabilities.

- Jan. 13, Madonna, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 25, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, Room 145, 1:30 p.m.

Throw Me an Anchor. Help me hang on.

- Feb. 10, Madonna, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 22, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, 1:30 p.m.

Step into your loved one's world.

- March 10, Madonna, 7 p.m.
- March 22, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, 1:30 p.m.



Save the date...
2011 Caregiver Retreat

A time for you to:

- Reflect
- Energize
- Create
- Learn

Wednesday & Thursday, April 27 & 28
Mahoney State Park, Ashland, NE

- For event information and reservations, call Western Community Health Resources at 800-717-1231 (ask for respite).
- For room reservations, call Mahoney State Park at 402-944-2523.
- Space is limited.
- Registration deadline: March 22

Scholarships are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Stress Management for Caregivers

Caregivers spend so much time providing physical, emotional and financial support to family members or friends, they often neglect to look after one of the most important people of all: themselves.

Fortunately, Aging Partners has been offering a once a week remedy at its Health & Fitness Center since spring 2010. Every Wednesday, from 10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m., yoga instructor Katy Ramos relaxes the bodies and souls of local caregivers.

For the past three years, Katy has been using her 12 years of experience to help caregivers manage stress through gentle breathing and stretching exercises that help improve flexibility and mood.

“Caregivers put out a lot of energy, and often it is hard for them to take any back in; yoga can relax them and help increase patience levels and develop compassion,” she said.

According to Katy, something as simple as shutting off a cell phone and sitting in a darkened room with calming music can not only lower blood pressure, but strengthen the immune system.

“It helps them feel better so they can refuel, replenish and go back out there and take care of the people they’re responsible for,” she said.

Yoga not only is good for the mind and soul, it’s also great for the body. It’s not unusual for participants of the class to notice positive health benefits after only taking one or two classes.



Instructor Katy Ramos helps local caregivers relax through the practice of yoga.

Sharon, a caregiver for her 90-year-old mother, has been taking yoga at the center for two months. After only one class, she noticed pain in her leg had significantly diminished.


“I like the class, it’s very relaxing,” she said. “It helps me relieve stress, and I look forward to coming.”

Caregivers worried about getting up from the floor needn’t worry; this yoga class is designed with older adults in mind. The movements are basic and simple and, instead of using a mat on the floor, participants use a chair for support.

Nancy, who has been attending classes for a few months, was at first

afraid to try yoga because she wasn’t sure she could get down on the floor and back up.

“In this class, we do the postures either sitting in a chair or standing near one,” she said. “It has given me confidence in myself and I have learned breathing and stretching moves that help alleviate aches and pains and the stress of being a caregiver.”

Though designed for caregivers, the class is open to any older adult wanting to avoid health problems and feel better about themselves. For more information, call 402-441-7575. 

National Family Caregiver Support Program

In recognition of the National Family Caregiver Support Program's decade of achievement and the family caregivers it serves, the U.S. Administration on Aging is collaborating with national and state caregiver organizations to sponsor a year of celebration. It began Nov. 17. It encourages communities across America to join in this celebration by:

- Hosting ceremonies and events to honor caregivers and their supporters.
- Conducting information sessions about the role of family caregivers and the support NFCSP can provide.
- Engaging community leaders and policymakers to think about their vision for the next 10 years of support for family caregivers.

For the past decade, the NFCSP has provided much-needed services to assist family caregivers. NFCSP-funded initiatives, the

Aging Network and other caregiver organizations continuously strive to meet the needs of both caregivers and the people in their care.

Family caregivers are the bedrock of America's long-term care system. Every day they assist relatives and loved ones with tasks ranging from simple supports, such as helping with household chores, to complex care, such as bathing, dressing and moving around the home. They also perform lifesaving measures such as administering medications and monitoring side effects.


Caregivers may be adult children caring for their parents, grandparents raising their grandchildren, or families looking after children and adults with physical disabilities. They are devoted spouses, parents and children as well as nurses, home health aides, paralegals and financial advisors for their loved ones.

National research shows:

- 66 percent of older persons with chronic disabilities are cared for by a family member.
- 65 million people provide care for a clinically ill, disabled, or aged family member or friend each year.
- 471,000 grandparents over 65 years old have primary responsibility for their grandchildren.

Although most caregivers view their work as rewarding, many experience significant stress and negative health impacts. To help alleviate the toll of caregiving, family caregivers need support and services that safeguard their health and emotional well-being, while relieving some of the financial burdens that often accompany caregiving duties.

AoA and the Aging Network also provide a comprehensive array of programs and supports to family caregivers. The NFCSP and other caregiver support programs have assisted millions of caregivers and their family members.

Visit the NFCSP's website at celebratingfamilycaregivers.org to download ready-made materials for planning and promoting your Year of the Family Caregiver events and help it celebrate its 10th anniversary. 
Information courtesy of celebratingfamilycaregivers.org

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Understanding Veterans Benefits

Not many things in life are free, but one thing veterans don't have to pay for is benefits information. There are a variety of outlets that provide free information, including the Lancaster County Veterans Service Office.

Gary Chalupa, Lancaster County Veterans Service Officer, is appointed by the Lancaster County Commissioners to assist Lancaster County veterans, their spouses and widows in applying for and receiving veterans benefits. He works under the direct supervision of the Lancaster County Veterans Service Committee, which consists of five veterans from throughout the community.

Veterans benefits are provided at the county, state and federal levels. Each county in Nebraska has a county veterans service officer responsible for assisting veterans and administering county

level programs. Officers also serve as an access point for most state programs and benefits, and can answer questions and provide assistance when applying for federal programs.

If veterans have access to the Internet, they can access a wealth of information on the VA website: va.gov.

Joining a local veterans organization is another way to stay current with ongoing benefits changes. These groups produce periodic publications that include information on new and changing benefits.

Though all of this information is provided free of charge, Gary said there are people who have made a business of offering services to veterans. Often, this cost is not clearly stated.

"You should always be wary of someone who 'promises' or 'guarantees' results


when applying for veteran benefits," he said.

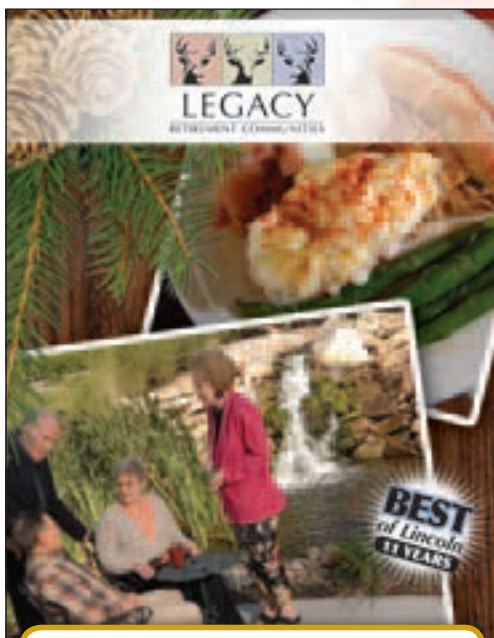
If a veteran is approached by someone who offers assistance in obtaining or increasing benefits, seek a second, and even third opinion before signing any paperwork or contract.

When someone offers to help, ask for proof that the VA recognizes them as an accredited representative. The VA provides certification for people with a high level of benefits expertise. They will hold the title of "Accredited Representative."

"Don't be afraid to ask, 'What will this cost me?'" Veterans benefits are an ever-changing and evolving system with changes and upgrades occurring on an almost daily basis. Where to go with questions is the most important thing for veterans to know," Gary said.

"In Nebraska, and in most other states, the County Veterans Service Office stands ready to provide assistance and help the veterans of their community," he said.

For questions regarding veteran benefits, call the Lancaster County Veterans Service Committee at 402-441-7361. You can also call the Nebraska State Service Office at 402-420-4021 or the Department of Veterans Affairs at 800-827-1000. 



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York: 402-362-4047



Live & Learn hosts win 2010 COAHP Community Health Volunteer Award

The 5 City-TV Live & Learn hosts accepted an honor Oct. 15 as recipients of the 2010 Coalition for Older Adult Health Promotion Volunteer Award. Live & Learn hosts receiving the award include, from left, Peggy Briggs, Ruth Ann Lyness, Harland Johnson and Delores Lintel. (Not pictured: Don Gill) 



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Inspiring the next generation of problem solvers begins with you.

The United States is no longer the leader in science and math education. According to national experts, today's youth are not prepared to take on the challenges of tomorrow. American students' performance in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) is on the decline: 80 percent of 12th graders perform below proficiency levels in science, and 15 year olds rank 35th in math and 29th in science literacy when compared with their peers around the world. There's clearly an immediate need for youth to develop a passion for STEM.

Last year, Lincoln's cable provider, Time Warner Cable, announced Connect a Million Minds,

a commitment to inspire the next generation of problem solvers by connecting young people to hands-on, after-school opportunities to experience STEM in non-traditional ways. One component of the program is The Connectory, an online directory where parents and grandparents can find local after-school activities to connect young people to first-hand experiences that get them excited about science and technology. A search of Lincoln ZIP codes will bring up several local opportunities including events at the Lincoln Children's Zoo, the YWCA, the Lincoln Children's Museum and many others.

Solving the STEM crisis is not something that any one person,

corporation or community can do alone. Providing fun and interesting science and technology activities outside of the school day is key to preparing today's youth to solve tomorrow's greatest problems. To find out what you can do, visit connectamillionminds.com to learn more. 

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Who knows? Before long, you may be embarked on an Elderquest of your own.

Primary funding provided by a grant from Nebraska Humanities Council, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications.

Joanne takes a step in the right direction

All it took was one phone call for Joanne Shaw to turn her life around. After years of encouragement from her doctor to eat healthy and exercise, Shaw contacted the Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center in October 2009.

Exercise has now become an important part of her life, and she has the results to prove it: Shaw stands 60 pounds lighter, and her Type II diabetes is under control.

An increased stamina has upped her workout from ten minutes to 30, and she can do more than three miles on the Nu-Step machine. Unless ill, Shaw works out five days a week.

"If I can't exercise, my day just doesn't feel right," she said.


Since beginning the exercise regime more than a year ago, Shaw has never felt healthier. A sufferer of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, the workouts have helped her breathe easier. She no longer uses a cane, and her joint pain has been nearly eliminated.

And, on Oct. 6, Shaw tried something she'd never before had the courage to do: yoga.

"I'm becoming much more flexible and relaxed from the positive side effects of doing yoga in class and at home," she said. "It's taught me to be tuned into my body and what it needs. I love it."

Shaw encourages others to take their own steps to a healthier life. She's learned first-hand that a combination of good diet and physical activity can do wonders for the body and soul.

"Eating right and exercising has completely changed my life, and I am so grateful," she said. "This journey has been wonderful. All of the staff at the Health & Fitness Center are kind, helpful and encouraging."

The Health & Fitness Center is open weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 402-441-7575 for more information. 

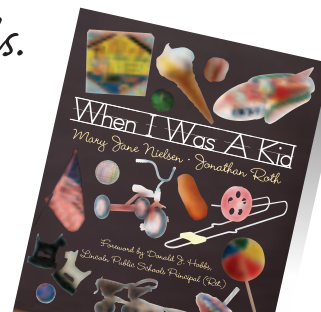
Eating right and exercising has completely changed my life, and I am so grateful."

— Joanne Shaw



With encouragement from the staff at the Aging Partners Health & Fitness Center, Joanne Shaw has made exercise a part of her weekly routine.

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When to Give up the Keys

In 2008, more than 150,000 Nebraska drivers ages 70 and older were licensed to drive by the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles. According to the DMV, the department strives to allow older drivers to remain licensed as long as they can reasonably and safely operate their vehicle. As drivers continue to age, however, medical conditions, medication usage and decreased mobility can increase risk of accident and injury among older drivers.

The time to give up a driver's license remains different for each individual, but older drivers themselves need to identify when it's time to stop driving.

Recognizing Signs

According to Hartford Financial Services, older drivers can ease the process by gradually transitioning from driver to passenger. Recognizing signs that it's time to begin the transition can help determine when that should take place.

It's important to monitor driving behavior patterns and signs that minor issues have progressed and could lead to incidents. Minor issues may include decreased confidence while driving, difficulty turning or visualizing backing moves, easily becoming distracted, incorrect signaling, hitting curbs and riding the brakes.

As older drivers progress to exhibiting serious driving behaviors, factors such as trouble navigating turns, driving at inappropriate speeds, failure to notice traffic signs and failure to recognize potentially dangerous situations come into play.


Other driving behavioral patterns that can signal when a driver's safety, and the safety of others on the road, becomes jeopardized include:

- Near-miss accidents or accidents.
- Delayed response to unexpected situations.
- Moving into the wrong lane.
- Difficulty maintaining lane position.
- Confusion at exits.
- Traffic warnings and violations.
- Getting lost in familiar places.
- Failure to stop at stop signs or red lights.
- Confusing the gas and brake pedals.

Developing a Plan

When one or more of these signs are observed, it's time to develop a plan. Take another driving course to learn ways to safely counter these driving habits or consider giving up driving.

For instance, AARP offers courses at a nominal cost to help people accommodate for age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time. For more information, call 1-888-277-7669.

As any transition begins, the Hartford recommends discussing transportation alternatives to help understand future options. Think about the positive consequences of not driving, such as less stress, saving money on vehicle maintenance and insurance, and dealing with parking. Above all, safety should remain the most important influence and concern among all drivers and their families. 



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Let AARP Tax-Aide Assist You with Taxes in 2011

Reduce stress this tax season by letting a knowledgeable and dedicated volunteer provide assistance free of charge.

A partnership between the AARP Foundation and the Internal Revenue Service, AARP Tax-Aide provides free tax counseling and preparation to middle and low-income taxpayers of all ages, with special attention given to those age 60 and over.

From Feb. 1 to April 14, Tax-Aide professionals will be providing assistance at the Downtown Center Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Allan Smith, AARP Tax-Aide district coordinator, hopes even more people will take advantage of the assistance in 2011. Thirty-eight volunteers are recruited to help this year.


"We encourage people to take the anxiety out of tax time and

seek help from volunteers at one of our Tax-Aide sites," he said. "Our goal is to serve people who are not comfortable doing their own taxes and can't afford to take their materials to a paid preparer."

Last year, 28 volunteers in Lincoln helped 1,422 citizens with their taxes. Volunteers also helped 161 households file for Homestead Exemption.

In addition to assistance with state and federal income taxes and Homestead Exemption, volunteers can help taxpayers file for federal and state earned income tax credits. Earned income tax credits are refundable income tax credits for low-income wage earners, ages 25 to 64. To be eligible, individuals must file a tax return.

To make an appointment at the Downtown Center, call 402-441-7158. Walk-in clients are also welcomed. Please bring with you:

- A copy of last year's income tax returns.
- W-2 forms from each employer.
- Unemployment compensation statements.
- SSA-1099, if you were paid Social Security benefits.
- All 1099 forms (1099-INT, 1099-DV, 1099-misc, etc.) showing interest and/or dividends, as well as documentation showing the original purchase price of sold assets.
- 1099 R forms, if you receive a pension or annuity.
- All forms indicating federal income tax paid.
- Child care provider information (name, employer ID, Social Security number).
- A list of itemized deductions that can be supported with receipts.
- Social Security numbers for all dependents. 

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Lancaster Event Center • Pavilion I • 8a-2p

Public Service Announcement



Candy Herzog, Administrator, invites you to a free lunch and tour of our facility.

The LEXINGTON Assisted Living Center

- 1 and 2 Bedroom Apartments Available
 - Seniors 62 Years and Older
 - Medicaid Waiver Approved
- Warm and Spacious Common Area
- Outdoor Courtyard with Fountain
 - Wellness Center
- Emergency Call System
 - Three Meals Daily
- Weekly Housekeeping and Laundry Service
- Medication and Personal Care Assistance
 - Full Activity Program
 - Beauty and Barbershop
- No Point System and No Hidden Fees
- In-House Physician Services
- Transportation to Physician Appointments Provided



5550 Pioneers Blvd. • Lincoln, NE • (402) 486-4400



LivingWell ♦♦♦

A Special invitation to the 57,200 and counting, 60-plus adults, their families and caregivers residing in Butler, Fillmore, Lancaster, Polk, Saline, Saunders, Seward, and York counties in Nebraska.

*Investing in today's
and tomorrow's older adults*

Your contribution helps Aging Partners publish the area's premiere resource for those 60 and over. Join us in supporting healthy, full and independent living.

Suggested Contribution Levels:

\$12 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ Other _____

And receive,

- Four print issues of *Living Well*, including online editions
- At your request, a note of acknowledgment will be sent to those receiving your gift in their honor or memory.

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"When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use the information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When we use information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day you make your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution."



New Beginnings. New Outlook. New Life.

A new year brings with it new opportunities, new chapters, and a fresh start.

Eastmont Towers, Lincoln's Life Care Community, is dedicated to providing comfortable amenities and superior service to our residents, giving them the lifestyle, the security, and the social opportunities to make their new chapter the best it can be.

Built on a Christian heritage we offer individuals exceptional and diverse living arrangements. We embody our mission and provide the value you expect in an environment that brings you satisfaction and peace of mind.

Call or stop in today for your personal tour.



6315 O Street Lincoln, NE 68510 402-489-6591
www.EastmontTowers.com