



The AGING ADVOCATE

AN ASCOG AREA AGENCY ON AGING PUBLICATION

“The Art of Aging”: 35th Annual Oklahoma Conference on Aging



Aging Oklahomans will be the topic of

discussion at the 2010 Oklahoma Conference on Aging, scheduled for May 18-20 at the Southern Hills Marriott in Tulsa.

“Oklahomans age 60 and over are the faster growing segments of the state’s population and by 2050, one in five Oklahomans will be 60+,” says Lance Robertson, director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Aging Services Division. “This event will discuss the many issues they face. Older adults, students, advocates, state officials, professionals in the field of aging and corporate representatives are urged to attend.”

The conference is proud to have Dr. Bill Thomas, an international authority on geriatric medicine and

eldercare, as the keynote speaker on May 19. Dr. Thomas is the founder of the Eden Alternative, a philosophy and program that de-institutionalized nursing homes in all 50 states and world-wide over the past 20 years. Dr. Thomas will not only motivate and inspire Oklahoma's elders and aging professionals; he will challenge and expand our concept of aging programs.

Tuesday, May 18 is Senior Day and is free of charge to anyone 60 and over. The keynote speaker is Dr. Jean Root, a Tulsa based geriatrician and a strong advocate for the concept of Optimal Aging which is the idea that we make the best of what we experience as we go through life even though it may not be ideal. Dr. Root will also be speaking to professionals on Thursday of the conference.

The conference concludes on May 20 with the annual Achievements in Aging Awards Luncheon where Lifetime Achievement Award winners will also be announced.

Special events have been scheduled, including a film festival, photography and poetry contests, health and memory



screenings and more. More than 50 vendors will showcase their products and services. In addition, nearly 65 breakout lectures are being offered during the course of this three day conference.

For more information, contact OKDHS Aging Services Division at (405) 521-2281.

Volume 3, Issue 2
Spring 2010

Dates to Remember

May:

9—Mother’s Day

18-20—Oklahoma Conference on Aging

31—Memorial Day, ASCOG offices closed

June-

17—AAAAC meeting, ASCOG Board of Trustees meeting

20—Father’s Day

Inside this issue:

AAA seeks senior advocates	2
Older adults at risk for poisoning	3
Check us out on Facebook	4
Ombudsman volunteer training	4
Staff directory	4

SENIOR INFO LINE: 1-800-211-2116

ASCOG AAA wants you to become a senior advocate!

The ASCOG AAA is currently recruiting Silver Haired Legislators to represent seniors in our area at the Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature Legislative Session in September.

A Silver Haired Legislator has a number of important functions to perform. What he or she actually does during their term depends solely on his or her interests, energy, time and concerns.

ASCOG is seeking advocates who will gather information about senior concerns from a variety of sources, including senior nutrition sites, independent senior centers or other organizations or activities that seniors regularly attend. We want legislators who will review and pass bills, and possibly write their own bills to be taken to the legislative session held annually in Sep-



Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislators pose for a group photo at the 2009 legislative session.

tember. Our legislators should effectively communicate to state senators and representatives to urge them to consider the concerns of seniors across the state.

At time of printing, ASCOG AAA is only represented by one senator to cover Caddo, Comanche, Cotton and Tillman counties, one representative to cover Caddo and Comanche counties, and one representative to cover Jefferson and Stephens counties.

We are currently seeking a senator to represent Grady, Jefferson, McClain and Stephens counties, a representative to

cover Cotton and Tillman counties, a representative to cover Grady and McClain counties, and alternates for all 6 of our legislators.

Not only do the Silver Haired Legislators participate in legislative sessions and senior advocacy at the capitol, they also become voting members of the AAA Advisory Council, the governing body responsible for oversight of the ASCOG AAA.

The input of our Silver Haired Legislators has always been a vital and much-appreciated voice on the AAA Advisory Council.

For more information call Melissa Colin, ASCOG SHL liaison, at (800) 658-1466 ext.39.

SENIOR INFO LINE: 1-800-211-2116

Older adults at increased risk for poisoning,

warns Oklahoma Poison Control Center

OKLAHOMA CITY – Because seniors take the majority of medications and have the most reported reactions to drugs, they are an at-risk population for poisoning, warns the Oklahoma Poison Control Center.

“As we age, how the body handles medications can change, leaving seniors more at risk for side effects and drug interactions,” said Lee McGoodwin, managing director of the Oklahoma Poison Control Center.

On average, seniors over the age of 55 take four to five prescribed medications and three over-the-counter products. Over-the-counter medications include vitamins, calcium, aspirin, pain relievers and laxatives.

“Seniors can be three to four times more likely than younger age groups to encounter adverse drug reactions that result in harm,” said Mark A. Stratton, professor and Herbert & Dorothy Langsam Endowed Chair in Geriatric Pharmacy at the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy.

Unintentional poisoning occurs among seniors for the following reasons:

- Failure to read the label
- Too-fine print on the label, making it difficult to read

- Poor lighting, again making labels more difficult to read
- Forgetting if a dose was taken
- Mixing products together that, when combined, are harmful
- Placing a small amount of a left-over medication in an unmarked container
- Storing medicines, cleaners and personal care products together in the pantry or medicine cabinet

Pouring chemicals into containers that are used for drinking
Storing multiple medications by the bedside and taking the wrong one

It also is important to remember that alcohol should be used with caution when taking medications because of the risk of drug interaction. Many over-the-counter products contain alcohol; therefore, be sure to read labels and know what ingredients are in the product.

The Oklahoma Poison Control Center recommends the following prevention tips for seniors:

- Keep a list of medications, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal products. Write down the name,

dose and when it is to be taken.

- Learn about the medicine being taken as well as possible reactions and side effects.
- Use one pharmacy, if possible, so the pharmacist can check for possible interactions between medications.
- Write down when medicine is given and how much. This will help decrease the chances of missing doses or taking more than needed.
- Practice proper storage and disposal of medications, cleaning products, personal care products and toxic chemicals.
- Keep all medicine, including over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbals, out of sight and reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.

Post the poison control center number, 1-800-222-1222, in a visible location.

For more medication tips, visit the Oklahoma Poison Control Center Web site at www.oklahomapoison.org

The poison center is staffed 24 hours a day by specially trained pharmacists and registered nurses. All calls are free and confidential.

SENIOR INFO LINE: 1-800-211-2116



Association of
South Central
Oklahoma
Governments

802 W. Main St.
P.O. Box 1647
Duncan, OK 73534

Presorted Standard
Duncan, OK 73533
Permit No. 134
Postage Paid

ASCOG AAA Staff

Executive Director

Blaine H. Smith, Jr.

AAA Director

Ken Jones

Managed Care Services

Marsha Bess

I&A Specialist

Melissa Colin

Ombudsman Supervisor

Vonn Saltzman

Ruben Sotelo

AAA Accountant

Joe Stuckey



We're on Facebook!

Check out the link at
www.ascog.org

Ombudsman Volunteer Training

To become an

Ombudsman volunteer call

Ruben Sotelo, Ombudsman Supervisor

(800) 658-1466 ext. 21



The ASCOG Aging Advocate is a quarterly publication of the ASCOG Area Agency on Aging. The Aging Advocate is funded with state and federal Older American Act funds from the ASCOG AAA and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

Editor: Melissa Colin