

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

**ASCOG
News'n
Briefs**

**Edition 330
December 2017**



HOLIDAY CLOSINGS
ASCOG will be closed on Friday, December 22nd through Tuesday, December 26th for the Christmas holidays. The office will also close Monday, January 1, 2018 for New Year's Day.

MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM ASCOG'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ASCOG has provided services through Advantage and its predecessor, Eldercare, for over 36 years. The program assists qualified seniors who desire to remain in their own home rather be forced to relocate to a nursing home. The services vary according to the needs of the participant but include such things as in-home checkups by professional health care workers, mowing lawns, doing the laundry, folding clothes, fixing meals, etc.

On October 31, ASCOG (as well as all other ADvantage providers) received a notice from DHS informing us that the program would end on December 1 due to budget constraints. For weeks following that announcement, elders using the program, their families and friends as well as employees delivering the program faced unnecessary anxieties and frustrations. Letters and phone calls flooded ASCOG as well as the offices of our state elected officials.

Legislators and the Governor worked diligently until they found a plan they could agree upon to provide enough funding to keep the program operational for the time being.. On November 21, DHS announced the program would remain funded "beyond December 1" but also stated they were short \$42M required to get to a balanced budget. The memo stated they would "be working to determine exactly how long the agency can sustain these programs with current funding." The battle has been won, but the war continues!

Although none of this was brought on by ASCOG, me or any of ASCOG's employees, I feel compelled on behalf of the SYSTEM to apologize to our elderly and to our employees who provide the services for the angst and days of worry you endured.

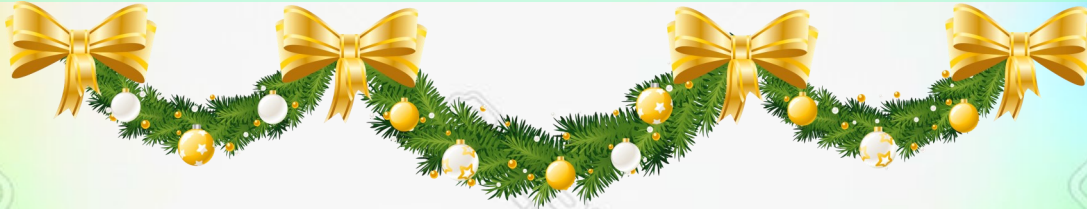
Please take time to thank your legislators for their continued efforts to find long-term solutions. The state's fiscal mess did not occur overnight, and it can't be fixed overnight. Thank our elected officials for ensuring the viability of the program - at least for the foreseeable future. Let none of us be too busy or callous during this season of giving to neglect thanking those who helped ensure the program continued.

Ronnie Ward - Executive Director



2018 REAP APPLICATION RESULTS

42 applications for 37 projects were received. Total amount requested \$1,808,657.56. Awards will be announced December 15, 2017, on the ASCOG website.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

CDBG Applications are just around the corner. If your community has a low-to moderate income (LMI) percentage of at least 51% and you do not have an open CDBG for Water/Wastewater or Community Revitalization and can use some financial help for needed projects, you should already be gathering needed information for your application submittal. The first step is to decide what project you will be submitting for funds and what the costs are expected to be. If you plan on using CDBG funds for engineering, you will have to complete a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. If you are planning on applying, please contact CED staff who has a proven track record of success for preparing and administering CDBG grants.

No application will be considered unless it includes a copy of the completed FY 2017 audit or "agreed upon procedures."

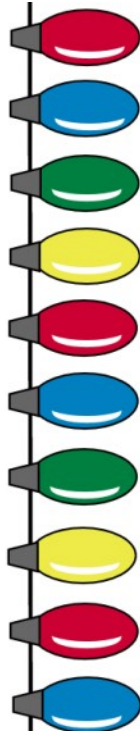
If you have any questions about CDBGs, contact CED staff.

Happy Holidays



OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The ASCOG Ombudsman program will host its annual Christmas Luncheon at Golden Corral on December 14, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. for ASCOG's volunteers in the program. The Ombudsman in our area work hard to ensure better quality care for the residents they serve. In February there will be a New Volunteer Training at the Red River Technology Center, in Duncan. For more information please call, **Dacia Nix**, Ombudsman Supervisor.



AAA ADVISORY COUNCIL TO HOLD DECEMBER MEETINGS

The ASCOG AAA Advisory Council will meet December 13 at 10:00 a.m. at the Red River Technology Center, Room B108 in **Duncan**. The meeting will be preceded by a board meeting of the new Elderly Services, Inc. at 9:00 a.m. and will be followed by a meeting of the ASCOG Silver Haired Legislature. For more information, contact **Ken Jones** or **Nancy English**.

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT ENDS DECEMBER 7

ASCOG's Medicare counselors are still taking appointments for Medicare counseling. Please contact **Kristina Manriquez** (formerly Brown) at 580.736.7036 to schedule your appointment. Additionally, Medicare counselors are available for speaking engagements at local community events. For more information, contact **Ken Jones** at 580.736.7972.

Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas.

Peg Bracken



PUBLIC SAFETY

Work continues to fill needs and find funding to pay for training and equipment.

Insurance payments for buildings and trucks are due now with state risk management.

Efforts to gather annual **run reports** are underway for the 2017 calendar year. It is the responsibility of the Rural Fire Coordinators to assimilate the reports and determine if they are sufficient to qualify departments for annual state funding distributed through the Department of Agriculture. Please get your reports to **Perry Brinegar** as soon as possible. Perry must review and submit them to the state fire marshal by January 15, 2018. .



**Merry
Christmas**



However you remember or celebrate this Christmas season, travel safely to and from your destinations, enjoy the company of family and friends, and give thanks for the gifts given and received. May your days be truly merry and bright!

From all of us at ASCOG