

MASONIC CHARITY FOUNDATION GRANTS

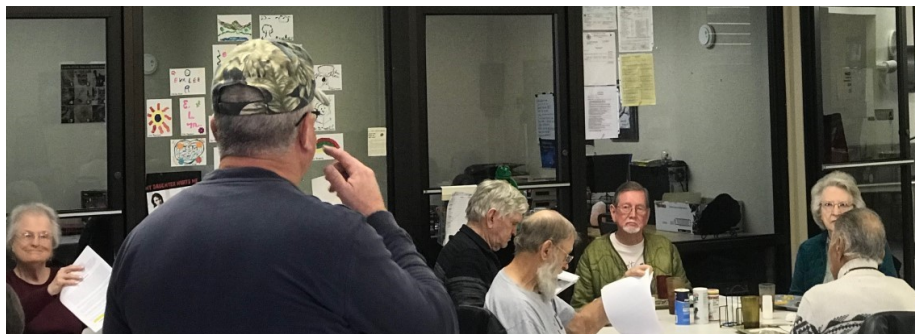


Since 2007, the Masonic Charity Foundation has provided funding to the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to fund grants for seniors needing assistance with things they cannot otherwise afford. Since its inception, funding has assisted 21,811 seniors throughout the state of Oklahoma - 1,553 in 2019 alone.

ASCOG's AAA has participated each year and was able to assist 121 seniors in our eight-county area in 2019. ASCOG does not mail out applications but has chosen to save the expenses for stamps, envelopes, stationery, printing, and mailing and use all available funds to be awarded for actual projects. Area newspapers have graciously printed articles about the availability of applications but that only reaches some. We emailed applications to our member government officials and requested they help by providing copies if requested. We also have applications available for download from our website www.ascog.org. Our employees also have tried to distribute copies to our nutrition sites. Working under the theory that the local elected officials will be better suited to know and identify seniors in their area that really need assistance, we are able to reach some who are truly in need but who would probably miss out.

A good example is Comanche County District 3 Commissioner Alvin Cargill who is personally reaching out to the nutrition centers in his area. He has already gone to the Cache Senior Citizen center (pictured) specifically to speak about the Masonic Grant and its eligibility criteria. He is scheduled to visit with seniors in Chattanooga and Indianahoma in the near future. We ask that anyone who knows a senior in need to inform them of this wonderful opportunity. Funds have been completely committed by the end of March the last two years so time is of the essence.

For more information, contact Ronnie Ward at (580) 467-7332 or by email ward_ro@ascog.org.



AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Requests for proposals (RFPs) for the SFY21 program year are currently being completed and will be posted by February 1st, 2020. Interested parties can look for the RFPs and announcements for conferences on our website at www.ascog.org. Additionally, the AAA is working to complete several opportunities for federal grants that will allow us to serve our communities in new and exciting ways. For any questions or for more information concerning the RFPs or AAA programs, please contact Kristina Manriquez by phone at (580) 736-7976, by email at manr_kr@ascog.org, or by the AAA Facebook page found at ASCOG Area Agency on Aging which can also be utilized to request appointments.

RURAL FIRE NEWS



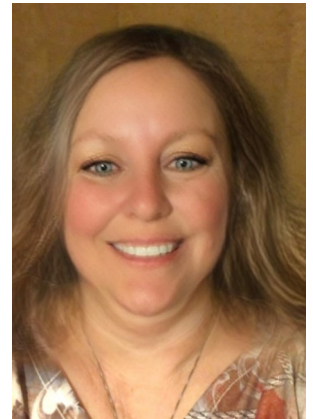
One of the larger tasks associated with assisting volunteer fire departments (old or new) is to work with their financial personnel documenting expenditures of their operational funding provided by the state. Over the next couple of months, these same departments will be working

on recertification. State run reports must be verified and filed with the state fire marshal. Proof of vehicle insurance and workers' compensation insurance must also be verified. Pecan Creek VFD in Comanche County is in operation as a new department being certified and Porter Hill VFD in Comanche County as a recertification. If you have any questions, please contact Perry Brinegar at brin_pe@ascog.org



United States Census 2020

Next year, for the first time, more households will complete the decennial census online rather than in person. You will receive a card in the mail with your passcode. You will be asked to go online and complete the census using your passcode as an identifier. The problem is, many older Oklahomans still do not know how to work computers to access the census. They are in danger of not being counted. This is even more true for low-income minorities. Federal and state funding is often based on age, minority status, and poverty level. To complicate things further, broadband in rural areas is not where we need it to be for isolated residents to complete the census. Workers will eventually go out to knock on doors for households who do not respond. But still the least likely to be counted are rural, low-income, minority, older Oklahomans.



Danielle Carpenter

This can have a huge impact on our services. Funding is based on the census. Representation in Congress is based on the census. Oklahoma legislative districts are based on census tracts. And funding for rural areas may be severely impacted.

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- Join the Complete Count Committee in your area or start one if one does not exist.
- Host online census parties at your local senior center or library, complete with internet access and computers.
- Offer to assist seniors in completing their census information online.
- Get the word out in your organizational newsletters that every senior must be counted.

For more information, go to Census.gov or contact Danielle Carpenter at carp_da@ascog.org.

2020 CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS

CDBG applications are next up. Please encourage entities in your area to start preparing and take appropriate action now if they intend to apply for a CDBG grant. We always have some that will wait too late to get the required meetings and other actions completed. The public hearings must be advertised at least seven days prior and then you must have a meeting to confirm what was done in the public hearing. Also, Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Surveys may be necessary to qualify. If federal funds are to be used for engineering, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process is mandatory. Engineering plans and specifications take time, so you should be talking to engineers now. **2019 AUDITS MUST BE COMPLETED** and included in the applications. If there are any questions, please contact CED Staff.

CDBG APPLICATION DUE DATES

CDBG-REAP - February 28, 2020

CDBG CR - Community Revitalization (community buildings, streets, sidewalks, equipment, fire trucks, etc.) – March 31, 2020

CDBG - Water and Wastewater Construction and Engineering - May 1, 2020

If you have any questions about Community Development Block Grants, please contact Tom Zigler

(580)736-7971 or e-mail zigl_to@ascog.org.



2019 REAP CONTRACT RECIPIENTS

All 2019 REAP Contract recipients have less than six months to spend your REAP funds. The deadline is June 30, 2020. Our projects are audited by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and are expected to be completed unless there are valid extenuating circumstances. Don't forget to submit pictures as your project progresses. Photos serve as proof you are spending the funds as intended. If you have any questions you need to contact Tom Zigler at (580) 736-7971 or by e-mail zigl_to@ascog.org.



LOVE IN THE NURSING HOMES

February is the month that people think of “LOVE” and will send flowers or cards or even candy to show that special person that they care and “LOVE” them. This is something that some people do only once a year. People need to know that others “LOVE” them and care for them more than just once a year. Since actions speaks louder than words, instead of showing it just once a year, how about doing it all year round? Then when February comes around again that special person will already know how you feel, and those gifts you give will mean even more to that special person because of what you have shown beforehand.



Give the best gift - yourself, to those that need it the most. Give the gift to those who are living in nursing homes and have lost loved ones or don't get to see their loved ones much because of different circumstances. The heart of the community can come from just one person. This one person can do many things for people by touching lives and lifting spirits. This can be done by visiting those in the nursing home, assisted living, and/or residential care facilities. One person can make a difference for someone by having a heart that cares and going the extra mile with just a smile. Sharing this kind of “LOVE” can go year-round and last a lifetime. This kind of “LOVE” can come from being an Ombudsman Volunteer.

Join the Ombudsman Program and spread the “LOVE” that last a lifetime all year round. To learn more on how to help others or becoming an Ombudsman Volunteer contact, David Sexton or Malcom Hutchinson at ASCOG Area Agency on Aging at (580) 736-7036, or the Senior Info Line (800) 211-2116, or write to them at P.O. Box 1647 Duncan, OK. 73534. Ombudsman Supervisors are available to speak to your group or organization upon request. Flexible training schedules to become an Ombudsman Volunteer are available.

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment to improve the world.” - Anne Frank



MEDICINE PARK'S PLUNGE WEEK

January 31-February 8, 2020

Various Locations

Medicine Park

(580) 591-3618

Take the plunge during Medicine Park's Plunge Week. This week-long winter event invites everyone out to enjoy a dance, guided hikes, live music, a poetry reading, high tea, beach ball croquet, and the famed Polar Bear Plunge in Bath Lake. The events kick off on Friday with the Polar Plunge Prom, a catered, semi-formal dance featuring prom music dating back to the 1940s. On Saturday, join residents and visitors alike as they don their swimsuits and dive into Bath Lake. Meet at the Park Tavern and join other plungers in a parade leading to the big event. Costumes are encouraged, so let your imagination run wild.

Throughout the week, other special events are held, including guided walks around Bath Lake and through the nearby Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Concerts are held throughout the town, and a high tea welcomes everyone out to sample tasty treats and warm drinks while wearing wild hats. Don't miss the fun at Medicine Park's Plunge Week.

LAWTON RV, BOAT & OUTDOOR LEISURE SHOW

February 7-9, 2020

Comanche County Fairgrounds

920 SW Sheridan Road

Lawton (405) 787-0787



The Lawton RV, Boat & Outdoor Leisure Show is bringing all the latest models of new RVs and boats at special show prices to the Comanche County Fairgrounds this February. Come see the latest in truck and car models from local dealers you know and trust, along with all kinds of outdoor-related products and services. General admission: \$5. Military w/ ID & senior citizens: \$2 off. Not to be used w/ BOGO voucher. Children (12 & under): Free.



OKLAHOMA HORSE FAIR

February 7-8, 2020

Stephens County Fair and Expo Center

2002 S. 13th Street, Duncan

(405) 344-7298

The annual Oklahoma Horse Fair in Duncan is a two-day horse event that includes a trail horse and ranch horse competition followed by a working cow dog competition. Over 200 ranch and performance horses, including a variety of ponies, will be offered for sale at auction. Over 50 vendors will be selling Western tack and decor, handmade bits, spurs, jewelry, art and crafts, Western wear, hats and livestock feed. Join horse buyers, sellers, trade show merchants and general horse enthusiasts at the Oklahoma Horse Fair and make your way through Stallion Avenue and the Western trade show.



STEPHENS COUNTY COIN SHOW

February 7-8, 2020

**Stephens County Fair and Expo Center
2002 S. 13th Street, Duncan
(580) 475-4570**

Head out to the Stephens County Coin Show in Duncan to browse through row upon row of coins to buy, sell and trade. Find out what your

treasured coins are worth or hunt down the elusive coin you've been searching for. This coin show features antique coins and more from all over the United States.

STEPHENS COUNTY JR. LIVESTOCK SHOW

February 17-21, 2020

**Stephens County Fair and Expo Center
2002 S. 13th Street, Duncan
(580) 255-0516**

Watch as children and teens compete at the Stephens County Jr. Livestock Show. Held in the Stephens County Fair & Expo Center in Duncan, this agriculture event features animals raised in Oklahoma, from large cattle to spotted rabbits to pink pigs. Members also compete in floral design and farm projects, among other categories. Stick around to see who takes home blue ribbons, banners, and the prized Stephens County Master Showman belt buckle.



CACHE VALLEY PREDATOR HUNT

February 21-22, 2020

**Cotton Electric Civic Room
302 N. Broadway St., Walters
(580) 281-0638**

Cache Valley hosts an annual Predator Hunt, featuring prizes for top hunters in big dog, big cat and big hog categories. At the event kickoff, the community comes together to enjoy a chili supper while the rules of the hunt are read. Guests can also participate in the Calcutta, betting on the favored huntsmen in the hopes of winning back earnings, before checking out the onsite vendor booths.