



## **ASCOG RE-OPENS OFFICES TO PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

ASCOG offices will open to the public unless the governor extends or renews his “Safer at Home” order for elderly and vulnerable populations. Access will be by appointment only. Please call ahead at 580.252.0595. Public access will be restricted to the lobby at 804 W. Main Street, Duncan. We are asking the public to check their temperature before coming to the office and to wear a face mask upon entering our building.



ASCOG’s AAA offers services and referrals in a variety of services. Neither the COVID-19 Pandemic nor any other situation will stop our delivery of services. While we may not be able to see many of our clients in-person, we are still delivering services and providing needed information about senior nutrition, Community Expansion for Nutrition Assistance (CENA), Information and Assistance (I&A), Medicare counseling, ombudsman services, and much more.

Please contact us for an appointment by phone 580.736.7036, Senior Information Line, 1.800.211.2116, by email [manr\\_kr@ascog.org](mailto:manr_kr@ascog.org), visit us on Facebook (ASCOG Area Agency on Aging) or via the ASCOG website, [www.ascog.org](http://www.ascog.org).

## **RURAL FIRE NEWS**



Department certification is wrapping up. Closing 80/20 grants with forestry, end of year project, and re-certification are the priorities for June. There are still a few trucks being built that should be ready for inspection by the end of June with a few new builds ready to start when forestry opens the yard at Goldsby. We are also starting inventory paperwork for the new fiscal year beginning July 1. Fifty percent of the loaned equipment from forestry has to be inventoried before December 2020.

Perry will be attending the Oklahoma Firefighters convention in June. For more information on when training may start again, contact Perry Brinegar at 580.574.2132 or [brin\\_pe@ascog.org](mailto:brin_pe@ascog.org).



## 2021 REAP WORKSHOP

This year's workshop is to be different than last year due to the coronavirus pandemic. To apply for a 2021 REAP Grant an applicant **MUST** attend this year's workshop by video conferencing. The attendee must be an elected official, or an individual appointed by the board or council to represent the entity making application. This appointment must be reflected in the entity's minutes.

Between now and the scheduled workshop date it is strongly recommended applicants should: (1) select an eligible project that can be fully funded including leveraged dollars, (2) get cost estimates from an eligible source and (3) take formal board action including approving making the application for the project, approving a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan, and approving any cash or in-kind leverage from the applicant agency. Keep in mind that these matches are not required but do figure into the scoring system.

2021 REAP grants will have the same time requirements. Projects must be started within 6 months and be completed by June 30,2022.

### 2021 REAP WORKSHOP VIDEO CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

June 24, 2020 – Please RSVP with full contact information to **Danielle Carpenter** at [carp\\_da@ascog.org](mailto:carp_da@ascog.org) or 580.736.7969. Conferencing is limited to one hundred participants per event. We request that there be one registration per application, but more than one individual may attend from your registration.

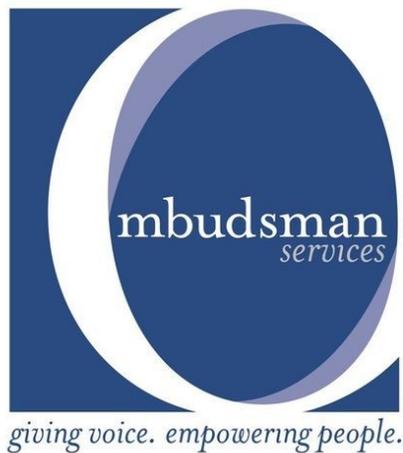
The training will be conducted by ASCOG staff and consist of reviewing the 2021 application, contract, five-year Strategic Plan, Community Development Block Grants and the fiscal year audit.

PLEASE call CED staff if you have any questions. **Tom Zigler** 580.736.7971, cell phone 580.736.828, **Danielle Carpenter** 580.736.7969, **Shannon Yarbrough** 580.736.7965 or **Ron Peel** 580.736.7024.

## NUTRITION CENTERS



Even during the pandemic, our nutrition centers have found ways to serve the seniors in our eight-county service area. Precautions are still in place and will remain until the governor lifts restrictions for vulnerable populations. Even after restrictions are lifted, new policies for keeping everyone healthy will be in effect. Centers are closed for dine-in service, but curbside pickup and home delivery are still available. Many centers report an actual increase in numbers of participants, which means more people are requesting and using this service. Not only is food provided, but a friendly face is there to say "hello." For inquiries related to nutrition, please contact AAA Planner **Jazmin Shipley** at 580.736.7029 or [ship\\_ja@ascog.org](mailto:ship_ja@ascog.org).



## **OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM AND NURSING HOMES**

Ever wanted to know how the Ombudsman Program and Nursing Homes go together? Let's start by stating what "ombudsman" is and what it means. The concept of an ombudsman originated when the Swedish government was in transition from a monarchy to a democratic government. The Ombudsman's responsibilities were to mediate between the government and the average citizen; explain policy, share information and act on the behalf of the citizens as well as the government; and were to act objectively and impartially when involved in problem solving.

Because so many problems occurred in nursing homes in the 1900s, something needed to be done. In 1971 the national network of long-term care ombudsman programs was established in response to the many problems found in nursing homes and was introduced as part of President Richard Nixon's Eight Point Plan to improve nursing home conditions. In 1978 the Amendments to the Older Americans Act (OAA) required each state to have an ombudsman program. Subsequent amendments to the Older American's Act have considerably strengthened the ombudsman program by expanding its responsibilities and its capacity to represent residents. The Oklahoma program started in 1979. State and Federal law provides ombudsmen access to long-term care facilities.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is administrated by the Aging Services Division of the Department of Human Services, through the local area agencies on aging, under the authority of the Older Americans Act and the Oklahoma Long-Term Care Ombudsman Act. The ombudsmen represent the interests of residents before governmental agencies to protect and make residents, facilities and the general public aware of the residents' rights.

A long-term care ombudsman is a person who receives complaints from residents of long-term care facilities, their friends and relatives and attempts to resolve those complaints within the facility. An Ombudsman advocates for changes to improve residents' quality of life and care, provide information to residents about long-term care services, educate and inform consumers and the general public regarding issues and concerns related to long-term care and facilitate public comment on laws, regulations, policies and actions.

The Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments (ASCOG) Area Agency on Aging provides support to the local Ombudsman Supervisor and additional support is provided by the state ombudsman program staff. Volunteer training is provided by the Ombudsman Program Supervisor. Training is provided four times a year or more if needed, throughout the eight counties covered by ASCOG (Caddo, Grady, McClain, Comanche, Stephens, Jefferson, Cotton and Tillman).

Join the Ombudsman Program and spread the "LOVE" that lasts a lifetime all year round. To learn more on how to help others, contact David Sexton at 580.656.0669 or Malcolm\_Hutchinson at 580-656.5595. Ombudsman Supervisors are available to speak to your group or organization upon request. Flexible ombudsman volunteer training is available.