



# NEWSLETTER OF THE OKLAHOMA ALLIANCE ON AGING

Published to Provide Information on Issues Affecting Older Oklahomans

Ken Jones, President

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## *President's Message: 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.

Complicating things further, broadband in rural areas is not where we need it to be for isolated seniors 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 the rural, low-income, minority, older Oklahomans.

Federal and State Older Americans Act funding is based on the total number of seniors 60 and older (50%), minorities (25%), and low-income seniors (25%). 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 Area Agencies on Aging may be severely impacted.

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.
- Visit [2020Census.gov](http://2020Census.gov) for more information.

## *Alliance on Aging Bylaws Changes by Marietta Real*

The Oklahoma Alliance on Aging approved amendment changes to the bylaws at the board meeting on December 17, 2019. We will send a copy in a few weeks to Alliance members and post to our website [www.okallianceonaging.org](http://www.okallianceonaging.org).

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The OAOA Board of Directors and members extend our appreciation to everyone that donated to our Endowment Fund through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, Inc.

Our deepest gratitude to the anonymous donor that contributed a significant amount of funds.

Your support ensures our ability to carry out our mission to identify the needs of aging Oklahomans, to educate on issues, and to advocate for solutions.

### *Legislative Report by James Crowder*

- One not-so-good reality in today's politics is extreme partisanship. The negative aspects are mostly experienced at the federal level, but they also impact work at state and local levels and mar the good work expected from all concerned.
- Regarding the opioid case, Oklahoma should examine what other states are doing and think of the judgment money as a supplement rather than a solution to solving our state's crisis.
- According to a national study using data from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, work-based health insurance is taking a larger bite than ever out of the paychecks of Oklahoma workers. The report determined that employee-paid premiums and deductibles grew 27% faster than the state's median household income between 2008 and 2018. These figures indicate that straightforward Medicaid expansion as provided by **SQ802** could be an answer.
- A lot of states are trying to require their residents to work in order to receive Medicaid benefits. The current administration is pushing heavily for work requirements, but the courts have been striking them down. Billions of dollars are at stake and thousands of people could lose their insurance.
- Following a number of notable incidents of Tulsa police using force, a recent study found that race was not a significant factor in officers' decisions. Researchers from two universities in other states have studied Tulsa to find ways to reduce the number of times Tulsa police use force on civilians.
- Dustin Rowe, who became mayor of Tishomingo in 1994 at age 18, has recently been appointed justice on the OK Supreme Court by Gov. Kevin Stitt.
- One year after it began scanning license plates, the OK Uninsured Vehicle Diversion program had located 10,000 uninsured motorists. Using sophisticated cameras and scanning equipment UVED scans license plates and checks them against the state's daily insurance database for compliance.

- The OK Dept. of Public Safety has begun a new drunk driving program created by state law. This allows DUI offenders to install an ignition interlock device rather than have their license automatically revoked by DPS.
- Law enforcement and state service agents swarmed one licensed and two unlicensed residential care homes recently in eastern Oklahoma. They served cease and desist orders, conducted interviews with developmentally disabled residents, and relocated about a dozen individuals to other residential care homes or living quarters.
- Regarding domestic violence in Oklahoma, 49.1% of women and 40.7% of men experience intimate partner physical violence, rape and stalking in their lifetime. This compares with a national average of 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men.
- The Tulsa City Council is establishing a website. One feature of the website is that it is expected to feature a section dedicated to Equality Indicators – measuring racial and gender disparities in the city.
- Since 2016 there have been no laws on the books requiring children 8 years and older to fasten seat belts in the back seat. Two high school students in Drummond believe this may be costing lives.
- More than 200,000 Oklahomans now have medical marijuana cards. That’s more than 5% of the population. Tax receipts show medical marijuana sales passed \$258 million through October.
- According to a new report, the number of patients who came to the Indian Health Service facilities who had health insurance rose from 64% in 2013 to 78% in 2018. This is encouraging but is still behind the national average.

***Plan to Attend***  
**2020 Senior Day at the Capitol**  
**Monday, March 30, 2020**  
**House Chamber**

***What is an Ombudsman? By Bill Whited – State Ombudsman***

Have you ever heard that strange word, ombudsman, and wondered, just what is an Ombudsman, anyway? A long-term care ombudsman is a person who receives complaints from residents of long-term care facilities, their friends or relatives and attempts to resolve those complaints within the facility. The ombudsman has the authority to explore problems and recommend corrective action.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is administered by the Aging Services Division of the Department of Human Services, through the local Area Agencies on Aging and under the authority of the Older Americans Act and the Oklahoma Long-term Care Ombudsman Act. The program is supported by local volunteers committed to improving and enriching the lives of those individuals living in long-term care facilities. One goal of the ombudsman program is to have volunteers in each facility in the state to work with the facility and surrounding community.

To be a volunteer in the ombudsman program, the applicant must have a concern about older people, their needs and the ability to see each as an individual. You must be able to work with many types of people without being judgmental; be responsible and be willing to follow problems through to their resolution. Each volunteer must be able to accept training and supervision and be able to spend at least

two hours per week in the program. Each volunteer must also be free from any conflict of interest and able to pass a national fingerprint background check.

For more information, contact the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at 405-521-6734.

### *Resources for Seniors Living Independently*

**Benefits for Seniors** is an online resource that assists financially vulnerable seniors to enroll in benefits that can help pay for prescription drugs, medical care, food, or heat their homes. Download, You Gave, Now Save: A Guide to Benefits for Seniors at <https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/money-management/budgeting/you-gave-now-save-benefits-for-seniors/>.

**Oklahoma Healthy Aging Initiative** enhances health and quality of life for older Oklahomans. Join the movement at <https://www.facebook.com/OKHealthyAging/>.

**OKC EMBARK** – Grocery Shopping. Embark serves 12 full-service grocery stores along 18 bus routes every day, with some stores served along five bus routes until midnight on weekdays. Find trip plans and grocers along bus routes at [embarkok.com](http://embarkok.com) or call 235-RIDE(7433) for personalized trip planning.

### **Weatherization**

1) The **U.S. Department of Energy Weatherization program** assists households with lower-incomes with lower utility bills with solutions like caulking, weather-stripping, insulation, and other health and safety measures. Find your local community action agency to apply or contact Amanda Marcott-Thottunkal at 405-815-5374 or [amanda.marcott-thottunkal@okcommerce.gov](mailto:amanda.marcott-thottunkal@okcommerce.gov)

2) **OG & E Weatherization and Home Energy Program** is available to all residential customers with income less than \$60,000 a year that own or lease a single-family, duplex or mobile home. Visit [oge.com](http://oge.com), look for the Save Energy and Money Tab. For eligibility and participation, contact Customer Service Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 405-272-9741(Oklahoma City) or 800-272-9741 (all other areas).

3) **PSO's Home Weatherization** assists customers with a household income of \$50,000 or less annually who own or rent a single-family home. For more information, call **1.888.776.1366** or online at [powerforwardwithpso.com](http://powerforwardwithpso.com).

4) **Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority** offers FREE residential energy audits to residential customers in one of OMPA's 42 members cities. To see if you qualify, contact your municipal electric company.

**Oklahoma State Plan on Aging.** State of Oklahoma's strategic goals through 2022.

GOAL 1: Support availability, flexibility and sustainability of Older Americans programs.

GOAL 2: To expand, enhance, and ensure the sustainability of gap-filling respite services to Oklahoma family caregivers across the lifespan and disability spectrum.

GOAL 3: Aging services will support a person-centered approach to outreach services to meet individual and diverse needs.

GOAL 4: Ensure the rights of older Oklahomans and prevent their abuse, neglect and exploitation.

## Join the Alliance...

*Together we make a difference!* The Oklahoma Alliance on Aging, a 501(c) (3), is a statewide non-partisan coalition. The Mission of the Alliance is to identify needs of aging Oklahomans, to educate on issues, and to advocate for solutions.

As a member, YOU stay informed on issues pertaining to aging Oklahomans. YOU receive a quarterly newsletter, participate in an annual survey on issues, and have an opportunity to attend Education and Strategy committee meetings. The Alliance gives YOU a voice in identifying and prioritizing concerns and issues while following legislation.

## Membership Application: (check one or more)

(Contributions above basic dues are **tax deductible** to the extent allowed by law.)

- |                       |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
|                       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Renewal</b>                   |
| <b>Individual</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Regular (\$25)</b>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Contributing (Over \$25)</b>  |
| <b>Organizational</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Regular (\$100)</b>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Contributing (Over \$100)</b> |
| <b>Sponsors</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$200 or more</b>                        |   |
| <b>Donation</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$_____ (any amount is appreciated!)</b> |   |
| <b>Endowment Fund</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$_____ (any amount is appreciated!)</b> |   |

Please designate representative to attend meetings and receive mailings.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please let us know if you would like to:**

**Volunteer**

(Area of interest) \_\_\_\_\_

**Work on a committee**

(Area of interest)

## Sponsorship Application: (check one)

- \$200 Newsletter**       **\$50 full-page**       **\$30 half page**

Help the Alliance by sponsoring the newsletter yourself or finding someone, an organization or business, to be a sponsor. By becoming a sponsor, you:

- Ensure copies of the newsletter are distributed across the state
- Are recognized in the newsletter edition you sponsor (your name or your organization's name, whichever you prefer)

Contact the Alliance office for details! Call 405-943-1895.

**MAIL TO:** P.O. Box 12008, OKC, OK 73157



Oklahoma Alliance on Aging  
 PO Box 12008  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73157  
[www.okallianceonaging.org](http://www.okallianceonaging.org)

Email: [Marietta.OAOA@gmail.com](mailto:Marietta.OAOA@gmail.com)  
 Call: (405) 943-1895  
 Hours: M, W, and F from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Officers:

- Ken Jones, President (2019-2020)
- Esther Houser, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (2019-2020)
- Janet Moore, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (2018-2020)
- Annette Mays, Treasurer (2018-2020)
- Open, Secretary
- Bill Whited, Past President

Staff: Marietta Real, Executive Director (PT)  
 Volunteer: Wanda DeBruler, Newsletter

Special *THANKS* to all our Volunteers and Supporters!

  
**Find.**

  
**Learn.**

  
**Give.**

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View our complete profile at  
  
*Know More. Give More.*  
[GiveSmartOKC.org](http://GiveSmartOKC.org)

A project of the  
 OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## *2020 CALENDAR*

### *Mark the Dates*

**Location:** The Daily Living Center, Board Room  
 3000 N. Rockwell, Bethany, OK  
 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

If a speaker is scheduled the program time is  
1:00-1:30 p.m.

**Quarterly Meetings:**

- March 17, 2020
- June 16, 2020
- September 22, 2020
- December 15, 2020

March 30, 2020 Senior Day at the Capitol  
 September 15-16, 2020 OSHLAA Meetings