

AGELESS TIMES



We are sad to announce the recent loss of two special and important people in our office: AAA Director Jonathan Mitchell and Outreach Manager Richard Ortley. Their loss is felt deeply by all of us at COEDD Area Agency on Aging. We miss them as friends and coworkers, and we thank them for the work they did to help others.

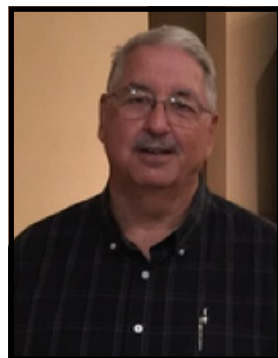


Jonathan Howard Mitchell was born September 2, 1956 in Marysville, California to William and Dona (Cowles) Mitchell. He passed away July 29, 2021 in Shawnee.

Jonathan spent 15 years in law enforcement, then was called to the ministry, first as a traveling evangelist and then as a pastor in Stroud. He always said he would never retire because serving the Lord gave his life purpose, and he was true to his word.

Jonathan went to work for Project HEART in 2015 in the Outreach Program. When the program moved to COEDD, he was appointed Outreach Manager. He achieved the position of Area Agency on Aging Director in August 2020. Jonathan always expressed a sincere desire to assist older adults, and he certainly helped many during his time at COEDD.

Survivors include his wife of 43 years, Jacque; three children, Curtis, William, and Aundrea; (4) grandchildren, (1) great-grandchild; and numerous family and friends.



Richard E. Ortley passed away Saturday, August 21, 2021, in Shawnee. Richard was born on December 13, 1950, in Point Pleasant, New Jersey to Lester H. and Doris M. (Erler) Ortley.

Prior to being promoted to Outreach Director at COEDD AAA, he worked three years as an Outreach Specialist and Housing Manager. Previously, he served as Director of New Age Nutrition Project that serves older adults in three counties in our service area. Said Richard once about his role at the Area Agency on Aging, "I'm blessed to work with and help our aging adults."

Richard was active in his church and helped seniors there with projects such as mowing yards and home repairs.

Richard is survived by his wife of 26 years, Gwen; four daughters, Kristen, Karen, Kelly and Kimberly; nine grandchildren and many other family and friends. His stepson Trey preceded him in death.

October-
December
2021

Dates to
Remember

Sunday
October 31
Halloween

Thursday
November 11
Veterans Day
*COEDD Closed

Thursday
November 25
Thanksgiving
*COEDD Closed
25th & 26th

Saturday
December 25
Christmas Day
*COEDD Closed
23rd & 24th

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From the Director's Desk



Greetings Friends,

My name is John Cobb, and I have recently assumed the role of Director for the COEDD-Area Agency on Aging. I am a life-long resident of central Oklahoma, and currently reside in Wellston. I come to the agency with a diverse public service background, most recently serving as the Administrator for the Town of Wellston. I have a strong desire to serve the public, and have done so in roles at the State, County and Municipal levels.

I was raised to respect and cherish our elders and it is an honor to follow in the footsteps of the previous AAA directors, taking on the important task of advocating for, and serving Older Oklahomans. The COEDD-AAA team is working to recover from the loss of Director Jonathan Mitchell and Outreach Manager Richard Ortley. Both men left a lasting impression on all who knew them. To honor their dedication to the citizens they served, we are working diligently to carry the torch forward and to ensure that Older Oklahomans are represented and cared for with dignity and respect.

The COEDD-AAA is currently preparing for the 2023-2026 Area Plan. This plan will outline the Title III programs that will be provided to participants in our service area. Our team recently sent out “Needs Assessments” to the nutrition sites, these assessments provide crucial input on the needs of Older Oklahomans. The results will be utilized as a road map for the Area Plan. Should you wish to participate in the “Needs Assessment”, please contact our office and we will get an assessment out to you.

The COEDD-AAA Team is here to serve you and we would love to hear from you. Our goal is to be as accessible as possible to those we serve. You can reach us by phone, email, in-person and even through our Facebook page; we want to make connecting with us as easy as possible. We encourage you to give us a call the next time you find yourself in need of an age-related service, or if you are struggling to find a solution to a need that you or someone you know has.

I wish you all well as we enter the Holiday Season, may you stay safe, healthy, blessed and loved!

-John R. Cobb
COEDD-AAA Director

RESOURCE DIRECTORIES HAVE ARRIVED!!!



The Information and Assistance Specialist (I&A) is excited to announce that our newest edition of the COEDD Area Agency on Aging Resource Directory just arrived!

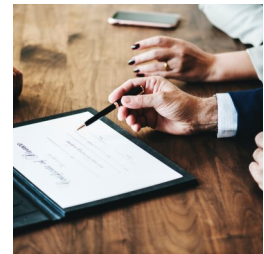
This directory lists a wide variety of resources in our seven county area for older adults. We know many of you have reached out wanting the latest copy. Give us a call at 1-800-375-8255 or 405-273-6410 Extension 128. to get one for yourself! We will also make it available on our website at www.coedd.net.

Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc

General Information on Services to Aging Oklahomans

By Chris Fox

Many aging Oklahomans suffer with civil legal problems they either can't afford to address or don't know how. So, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc (also known as LASO) offers free civil legal help to Oklahoma's older adults in order to preserve their independence, choice, and financial security.



One great example of this legal help is the OK-SPLASH partnership between LASO and Area Agencies on Aging. OK-SPLASH is the Oklahoma Sixty Plus Legal Aid Services Helpline. Through this partnership, qualifying Oklahomans 60 and older can receive free legal advice and counseling from an attorney. The advice or counseling can be related to any civil legal issue the client faces. Some examples include discrimination, eviction, unemployment, or food assistance.

Another way LASO serves aging Oklahomans through OK-SPLASH is by providing community education. Presentations at community centers, libraries, and even virtually online provide Oklahoma seniors with helpful information across a wide variety of topics. Attorneys present community education presentations on wills and trusts, taxes, retirement, and disability. These forums give information to a large number of Oklahomans while highlighting the legal help available from LASO.

To contact the OK-SPLASH Helpline, call 1-855-488-6814.

DEMENTIA CAREGIVING TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAYS



How should families approach traditional holiday gatherings?

If you have a family member with memory loss, the best thing you can do is adjust your expectations. There are so many changes and challenges with Alzheimer's disease that the key to success at the holidays is being flexible and creative.

Adult children who have one parent with dementia and the other as the caregiver should consider what is in the best interest of each parent when planning events. For example, while children might long to visit their parents with their families on one special day for the sake of tradition, that might be the last thing the caregiver desires. Mom might have been up all night caring for Dad and the house might be disorderly because she is too busy to clean.

Structure and routine are important for a person with dementia. If there is any change—like attending a gathering at another home—he or she could be out of sorts for the next few days, adding stress to the caregiver. Sometimes, it's best for the loved one to stay at home and receive visits of 30 minutes or less from a small number of guests stretched out over a period of days. Keep the number of guests to a minimum; sometimes even having two extra people in the room can be too much stimulation.

How can caregivers prepare traveling family members for the changes in their loved one?

Talk with your out-of-town family beforehand and let them know that their loved one may be different than last year so they are not shocked by changes. Be specific. Say, for example, "He's not talking a lot" or "She may ask the same questions over and over again" or "He may not know who you are." Discuss some behaviors they might witness, such as walking around the house, needing assistance in using the bathroom or being messy when eating.

What are the best ways family members can spend quality time with a loved one during a visit?

Holidays can be sad times for families dealing with memory loss because they realize things and people are not as they used to be. However, that doesn't mean we can't appreciate the time we have together and make new connections and memories.

When visiting with someone with memory loss, bring a bag of tricks: snacks, coloring books, crafts, photographs, memorabilia. There are so many ways we can connect with each other even when a person can no longer talk or remember a shared history. Music—especially singing songs together—is a wonderful way to share an experience. Although people lose the ability to converse, their ability to sing is preserved in a beautiful way. Plus, the holidays present a roster of familiar carols.

Tactile projects, such as coloring or making cookies, are other ways to enjoy time together. Engage loved ones in ways that match their abilities. Perhaps they can hold a bowl or roll dough. It's even meaningful if they simply sit at the table while others perform the tasks.

Continued on Page 5

You can also look at holiday cards together and use the visuals to make small talk. People with dementia may lose their ability to have a conversation. Guests and caregivers can converse, but should make the loved one feel included even if they don't respond. Don't shy away from reminiscing as that can be a comfort for the caregiver. However, refrain from asking the loved one "Do you remember?" or expecting them to give you details from the past. It's also good to remind the loved one of your name and your relationship to them from time to time.

How should family members initially approach a loved one with dementia?

Enter the room slowly and offer your hand respectfully. Wait for the loved one to take it and respect them if they do not. Introduce yourself by name and relationship. Never ask "Do you know who I am?" If you want to hug them, lean in slowly and read their cues. If they get tense or back up, they are not comfortable. Realize that people who never wanted to be touched may suddenly be interested in holding your hand all the time-and vice versa. Read their cues and be open.



How can family members reduce the stress of caregiving during the holidays?

It's very isolating to be a caregiver, especially as the illness progresses. Caregivers often do not get out and are lonely-a situation that is compounded by being at home all day with a person who is unable to engage with them. Whatever you can do to brighten their day is appreciated, whether it's bringing them a meal or, better yet, offering to stay with the person so the caregiver can attend a family gathering or take time for him or herself. Extend this gift of yourself throughout the year. If you're an adult child of someone with dementia, offer to stay with a parent each weekend for a few hours to provide relief to a caregiving parent or sibling.



**Are you a CAREGIVER caring for a person
age 60 or over or a
GRANDPARENT RAISING
GRANDCHILDREN???**

**Do you need help with your Caregiving
responsibilities???**

**Would \$400 worth of vouchers (every 3 months) help you pay
someone to provide respite (caregiving relief)????**

**If you answered yes to these questions, please call:
Caregiver Coordinator Debra Case at COEDD Area on Aging
405-273-6410 Ext. 130**

***Are You Reviewing Your
Medicare Prescription Coverage Every Year?
It Could Save you Money!
We're Here to Help!***

COEDD Area Agency on Aging (AAA), in cooperation with the Oklahoma Insurance Department Medicare Assistance Program, is again offering free Medicare Part D Plan Comparison and Enrollment assistance throughout the Fall Open Enrollment Period: **October 15th—December 7th.** We're here to help you take the guesswork out of your prescription drug coverage for 2022.

A certified counselor will provide unbiased, easy-to-understand information to help you compare Medicare Part D Plans and assist you in selecting or changing your drug coverage for 2022.

Each year Medicare Part D Plans change their premiums and what they cover, so it is encouraged to review your coverage each year. Remember, this is the only time of year that Part D changes can be made.

Counseling sessions will be done over the phone. To schedule your appointment or for more information, contact Information & Assistance Specialist Kristi Tischer (Extension 128) at 1-800-375-8255 or 405-273-6410.



You May Qualify for Medicare “Extra Help”!



Medicare beneficiaries with limited income and resources may qualify for “Extra Help” to pay for Medicare Part D prescription drug costs. If you qualify, it can help reduce your drug costs, including monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and prescription copayments. Many people qualify and don’t even know it.

To qualify for Extra Help, income must be less than \$19,560 a year (or \$26,370 for married couples). Your resources must also be limited to \$14,790 (or \$29,520 for married couples). Your home, the land it stands on, your cars, burial plots, or personal possessions do not count toward the resource limit.

COEDD Area Agency on Aging can help you apply for this benefit. It’s easy and free to apply and can be completed over the phone with a COEDD AAA staff person. Call Kristi at 1-800-375-8255 Ext. 128 or 405-273-6410 Ext. 128 to find out more!

OMBUDSMAN NEWS



Long-Term Care Residents Honored During Residents' Rights Month, October 2021

Reclaiming My Rights, My Home, My Life



Across the country, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities along with family members, ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff and others will honor the individual rights of long-term care residents by celebrating Residents' Rights Month in October. Designated by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, this month highlights the importance of listening to residents who live in our country's nursing homes, assisted living and residential care facilities.

This year's theme is "Reclaiming My Rights, My Home, My Life." The theme acknowledges the impact of this past year on residents, and highlights the need for residents' rights to be recognized, recovered, and reasserted. It emphasizes the recognition of the long-term care facility as the residents' home, and the importance of residents reclaiming their own lives.

"This year's Residents' Rights Month theme focuses on raising awareness of federally and state mandated residents' rights while also underscoring the need for dignity and self-determination of all residents," said Lori Smetanka, Executive Director of the Consumer Voice.

To learn more about residents' rights in long-term care facilities visit the Oklahoma Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman website at <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/services/cap/ombudsman.html>. The Ombudsman Program serves residents in Oklahoma's Long-Term Care Facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living and similar care homes. An Ombudsman helps improve quality of life and quality of care to long-term care facility residents.

If you need to talk to an Ombudsman about residents' rights in long-term care facilities or if you are aware of violations of residents' rights you can contact the assigned Ombudsman by calling 1-800-211-2116 or you may email ombudsman.intake.line@okdhs.org. Also consider following the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/OKSLTCO>. **Your local Ombudsman, Denise Luzmoor (Extension 133) and Cherry Love (Extension 127), can be reached at COEDD AAA at 405-273-6410.**

Thank you for working to make Residents' Rights Month meaningful for all involved. You may also visit www.theconsumervoice.org for more information about quality long-term care and residents rights.

COEDD Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
Serving Hughes, Lincoln, Pawnee, Payne,
Pottawatomie, Okfuskee, and Seminole Counties

400 N. Bell St.
Shawnee, OK 74801

Phone: 405-273-6410
Fax: 405-273-3213
Toll-Free: 1-800-375-TALK (8255)
Senior Info-Line: 1-800-211-2116


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This newsletter is published by COEDD Area Agency on Aging as authorized by the Administration on Aging, Department of Human Services under Title III Older Americans Act grant. Copies have been deposited with the Publication Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. This newsletter is provided as a communication tool for older persons in the area.
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Oklahomans have been able to call the Senior Information Line for several years to reach their local Area Agency on Aging from anywhere in the state. We are excited to announce that this line has expanded to serve a broader population offering convenient access to a variety of programs. It is now called the **Caring Assistance Line** and the number remains the same, **1-800-211-2116**. Just call and follow the prompts. As always, if you call for aging resources in our service area, it will connect you to us at here at COEDD AAA. Give us a call!



CARING ASSISTANCE LINE
1-800-211-2116
Aging and Disability Resources for All Ages

Statewide Caring Assistance Line for Aging and Disability Resources & Supports:

- Respite locator & support groups
- Family Caregiver resources
- Legal assistance
- Food assistance
- Medicare/Medicaid information
- Prescription drug assistance
- Grandparents & other relatives raising children
- In-home assistance
- Medical equipment & supplies
- Transportation resources
- Employment resources
- Long-term care resources

OKLAHOMA Human Services
O4A OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING
OKCares
SOONER SUCCESS Serving, Supporting, Building Inclusive Communities

Contact Info:
OKCares.org
info@okcares.org

