



# GOLDEN YEARS

## OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2024

This issue of Golden Years is dedicated to life stories of some clients and friends of ECKAAA.

## WRITE YOUR OWN LIFE STORY

It was Socrates who said the unexamined life is not worth living. He preferred the death sentence to being unable to examine his life. He may even have said, "Writing my life story is more important to me than living."

If you would like to write your Life Story here are some ways to get started:

Introduce who you are.

Include relevant information; date born, ancestry, married, children, etc.

List your achievements; job, sports, etc.

Add personal details; favorite food, etc.

Reflect on your past and how it shaped you today; events like war, etc.

- 1- Keep your readers in mind when sharing your life story. Remember to record sights, sounds, smells, and texture. Instead of writing – a bird sat in the tree. Write – A kookaburra perched on the branch of a spindly blue gum.
- 2- Write, Write, Write – Start small and gradually increase the time.
- 3- Think about specific events.
- 4- How do you want to organize your story – write about specific periods in your life.
- 5- Choose a theme for your story – Is there something I long to share? Lessons learned, etc.
- 6- Get friends and family to jog your memory.
- 7- Use photos to relive your memories.
- 8- Add emotions to trigger your readers emotions. Make them laugh, make them cry, make them happy, or surprise them.
- 9- If you are not much of a writer, use video and audio to record your memories.

Enjoy writing **your** Life Story!



### **Geni Gellhaus**

Geni was born and raised in Garnett, Kansas. Her parents are Bill and Wilma Powls. Her ancestry consists of English and German. She has two brothers and two sisters. Geni's favorite book is "Call of the Wild". She remembers her dad singing to her "Ghosts Riders in the Sky" and her mom singing one of her favorite songs "Greensleeves", which is a traditional English folk song.

In the 1980's, Geni moved to Ohio and then to Arizona. She worked for Honeywell/Aerospace until 2005 when she retired. Geni went to work as a contractor for Game and Fish Wildlife in Arizona and would camp out and document Bald Eagle habitats. In 2007 she moved to Alaska and worked at Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary until 2014. She did wildlife rescue and rehabilitation and conducted presentations on Reindeer. It was supposed to be a 6-month assignment but it turned into seven years. In 2017 Genie moved back to Garnett to help care for her mother.

Geni would like to be remembered as helping with wildlife rescue. She would never give up or trade anything she has done in her life. The most important impact on her life was seeing Sitka, Alaska for the first time and noting how beautiful it was.

Geni has sugar gliders, peacocks, chickens and cats. She loves wildlife and all animals. Her hobbies and free time consist of sketching, painting and photography.

Geni is working part-time in a shared position as nutrition Site Manager in Garnett for ECKAAA.

She added that one day she would love to go horseback riding in Colorado!



James “Jim” Stukey

Jim was born April 22, 1958 in Burlington, Kansas. He grew up in Topeka, Kansas and graduated from Highland Park High School. Jim has one sister and two brothers. One brother is deceased and the other brother lives in New Strawn, KS. His sister lives in Topeka and Jim lives in Burlington. Jim's mother was from Aliceville, Kansas and his ancestry is Swiss, English, Welsh, German and Scottish. He is related to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who is known for being a musician, theologian and physician.

Growing up Jim had several jobs including yard work, working in restaurants, Wolf Creek nuclear power plant and teaching art to students at COF and Journeys Inc. in Ottawa and Emporia, KS. These agencies serve the intellectually and developmentally disabled. Jim is known for his mural art and has a painted mural on the side of a building in Burlington and he painted the trees inside the Burlington Library. He also created the artificial tree that is located in the library. Jim was one of the recipients of the Kansas Sampler Magazine 2018 award, "Painting the Town". Jim was featured on the cover of Southeast Kansas Living Magazine in the 2020 summer issue, title; "Meet the Mural Man".

One of his favorite movies is "Steel Magnolias". He feels lucky to have played the part of Ouiser in an Emporia production of the play. Ouiser Boudreaux was portrayed by Shirley MacLaine in the original movie. Jim was also in the Flint Hills Opera portraying a comedian and was an extra in the Prairie Home Companion show starring Garrison Keillor and got the chance to meet Tommy Lee Jones.

Some of Jim's favorite spots to visit include Key West, Florida and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

When asked what was one of the greatest inventions in his life time he stated the color television. A world event that had an impact on him was the Mount St. Helens eruption in 1980. The eruption killed at least 55 people and destroyed the entire north face of the mountain. His favorite food is macaroni and cheese and his favorite holiday is Halloween because everyone gets to dress up.

Jim said he would like to be remembered for his art and his love for helping people.



**Mary Ellen Paul**

Mary Ellen was born July 7, 1951 in Emporia, Kansas. Her parents owned a farm outside of Lebo, Kansas which is where she grew up. Mary attended Waverly High School. She said her parents raised chickens, pigs, and milk cows. She helped feed the chickens and gathered the eggs. They had wood stoves in the house and she helped cut and carry wood to the house. Mary has two brothers and two sisters and she is the oldest child. Mary said her mother always had a huge garden and they canned the produce. Mary commented that when she was younger they did not have a television set in the home and her parents purchased their first TV when she was in high school. Mary said she learned how to sew at 12 years old and made most of her clothes.

Mary Ellen and Cecil John Paul, Jr. were married November 7, 1970. They moved to Coffey County in 1971. Her husband was in the United States Army and served in the Vietnam War. Cecil passed away December 9, 2013. Mary has one daughter and three grandchildren.

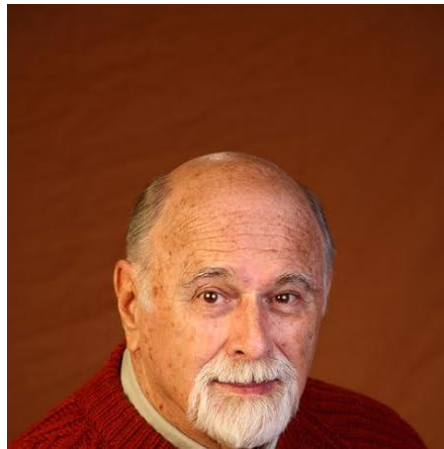
Mary has had several jobs including working at Wolf Creek nuclear power plant and at the Burlington Library. Mary received her Bachelors degree online at Baker University in Topeka, KS. She delivered Meals on Wheels in Burlington for a little over a year in 2015.

When asked what was the most impressive invention in her lifetime she said the word processor computer. Mary worked mostly clerical jobs and she remembers the first processor she used. The company had people come in and train them how to use the computer.

Mary is most proud of the first home she and her husband purchased after they both worked so hard to achieve it.

Mary has enjoyed going on day trips through Burlington Recreation Center to places like Union Station in Kansas City and Quindaro neighborhood in North Kansas City. Another program she participates in through the Recreation Center is "Lunch with Linda" where they take the bus and go to nearby restaurants for lunch. She commented they came to Ottawa and ate at Grub and Chug.

Mary enjoys reading and quilting. One of her favorite things to do is at Christmas time when her family gets together and makes or brings cookies to share.



### **Patrick Shannon**

Patrick Shannon was born on December 21, 1931 in Los Angeles, California. He will be 93 years old in December. Raised in Southern California in a place called Signal Hill. Patrick had three (3) brothers. Patrick lived in Ottawa, KS but currently lives in Lawrence, Kansas. Ancestry – as you can tell from the name Shannon – he is Irish. He also has French and Spanish heritage.

Patrick lived during the Great Depression and World War II. He remembers the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He mentioned the “Los Angeles Air-Raid” where his parents went outside to view it. Some people believed they were UFO’s sightings. Patrick was 10 years old when this happened. He talked about when he was in high school and went with his girlfriend to a Youth For Christ event and the music director was Billy Graham. A famous singer, “Marilyn Horne” was in his music class (A Capella Choir) at school.

He has three (3) children – Katie Smith, Mike Shannon and Tom Shannon. His grandson, Deputy Sam Smith, was on the Franklin County Sheriff’s Department and died in the line of service on July 23, 2010.

After serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, Patrick worked for a major oil company for 33 years, bringing him rich experiences traveling in Asia, the Middle East and all across America.

He attended East Carolina, Oklahoma University and UCLA. He is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi scholastic society and the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. Patrick has written several books such as “Viva Laughter”, “Letters from Wheatfield”, “Viva Cisco”, “Tame the Wild Land”, “Life in A Minor Key” and “The Price of Glory.” Patrick has always found delight in the comedic side of human nature, and he can think of no higher honor than someday to be considered a bona-fide humorist. He produced a short story – “A Tissue of Lies” and is still writing and working on another novel.

## How to Use Retirement

### Patrick Shannon

After I was blessed with a “Golden Parachute” early retirement from ARCO, I slowly began to evolve into Abraham Maslow’s Self Actualization stage (the top of his Hierarchy of Human Needs). For 33 years, I had been the man the *corporation* expected me to be. Now I could become the man I *truly* was. But the process turned out to be slow and involved my going up some blind alleys.

First, I took some courses in electronics, but that didn’t seem to fulfill what was a nagging desire which hadn’t yet made itself known.

Next, I took the Gemological Institute of America’s course in Colored Stones, also learned how to facet those stones, cut a beautiful collection of them, then sensed that that was not how I wanted to spend the rest of my life.

Then I produced five bronze sculptures, of which I was proud, but I was satisfied with doing the five. There was some strong urge lurking in my soul which was only letting me know what I *didn’t* want to do with my newfound freedom.

How I rediscovered my true passion, which had begun in High School but lay dormant for years, came about quite by accident.

My wife was taking computer classes, and one of her assignments was to create a newsletter for a fictional retirement home. She could handle the formatting, creating an attractive masthead, and creating headings for the various topics. But she had no idea of what to provide as *content* for each topic. So, she asked me to write that for her.

Now, I have had a sense of humor all my life, and I credit laughter for there still being a young man inside my ancient 92-year-old body. So, one day while my wife was in the grocery store, I sat in the car and started writing the content for her newsletter. Suddenly, as if someone else were writing it, hilarious satire began pouring forth and I was sitting in the middle of the parking lot laughing my head off at my *own* stuff. I remember thinking to myself, “My God, I can *write!*” Since then, it has become the thing I cannot stop doing.

My first four published books received eight awards in literary competitions. My sixth book, a historical novel, was published earlier this year, and I am currently working on a new book. I found my true passion, it has actualized my authentic self, and it has filled my life with joy.





Denis & Kathryn Schlotzhauer

Kathryn Anderson Schlotzhauer and Denis Schlotzhauer epitomize the essence of rural American life, filled with familial values, hard work, and community spirit. Growing up in Kansas, both Kathy and Denis were nurtured in farming families where their formative years fostered resilience, creativity, and a deep sense of duty. Their intertwined paths culminated in a loving partnership that not only shaped their individual lives but also left an indelible mark on their community and family.

Kathryn Anderson Schlotzhauer was born in Goodland, Kansas, in 1944 to Ray and Opal Anderson, the youngest of five siblings. Growing up on a farm, she developed a strong connection with nature and rural activities. One of her fondest childhood memories is horseback riding, which reflects her adventurous spirit. Kathy's education began in a one-room schoolhouse in Globe, Kansas, where her mischievous tendencies took root as she often teased her older brother and got into scrapes with classmates. This playful side persisted through her schooling, eventually leading her to Overbrook, Kansas, where she completed her education.

Denis Schlotzhauer was born in 1942 in Kansas City, Missouri, to Ralph and Ethel Schlotzhauer, was the oldest of five children. He spent his childhood on a farm, cultivating a strong work ethic and family values. His early schooling began in Bucyrus, Kansas, and transitioned to Willow Branch Elementary, another one-room schoolhouse. Denis, like Kathy, found himself in playful trouble, often teasing his mother and sisters, indicating a light-hearted yet spirited personality.

Denis and Kathy met during their high school years in Overbrook, Kansas. They eventually tied the knot on November 2, 1962, in Lawton, Oklahoma. The couple embraced family life, raising three children: one daughter and two sons. Their early years were characterized by a series of moves across Kansas, ultimately leading them to build their home outside of Centropolis in 1974, where they established a hog farm.

Kathy's career was marked by variety and adaptability. Early on, she worked washing dishes near Baldwin Junction and later took jobs in dry cleaning and at Hallmark Cards in Lawrence, Kansas. Her diverse experience continued as she became a school bus driver for USD 287 and later USD 290. She cherished her time working as a hospitality aide with seniors at Rock Creek, where her warmth and humor left a lasting impact on the residents. Kathy's passion for helping others and her affinity for laughter defined her professional life, culminating in her position at KVC in Ottawa.



Denis's career journey also exemplified commitment and leadership. After farming, he dedicated 12 years to the Army National Guard, retiring as an officer. He later became a supervisor at Hallmark Cards and ventured into insurance sales before finding a fulfilling long-term position at Santa Fe Railroad, known today as Burlington Northern Santa Fe. Denis's steadfast work ethic saw him rise to the supervisor level across multiple roles, ultimately leading to his retirement after 32 years.

Kathy and Denis's shared commitment to community engagement is evident in their various volunteer activities. They served as 4-H leaders, participated in KOA RV campgrounds in Oregon and Montana, and volunteered for Meals on Wheels in Ottawa. Their wanderlust has taken them across the United States and abroad, from vacations in Spain and Mexico to adventures in the Rockies and a memorable cruise to the Bahamas. Their love for travel continues with participation in local trips, showcasing their enthusiasm for exploration and community connection.

Both Kathy and Denis have witnessed numerous historical moments and personal milestones, shaping their worldview. They recall the somber event of President John F. Kennedy's assassination, with Kathy reflecting on how she was pregnant with their first child at that time. They fondly reminisce about significant events such as the first moon landing and their involvement in President Obama's campaign, which included meeting Caroline Kennedy in Texas. These experiences are testaments to the couple's engagement with both local and national narratives.

When reflecting on the best advice they received, Kathy emphasizes the importance of communication and conflict resolution: always avoid going to bed angry and steer clear of cursing at one's spouse. Denis, on the other hand, highlights the timeless principle of treating others how you wish to be treated, encapsulating a golden rule of human interaction.

Today, Kathy and Denis cherish their roles as grandparents to four (4) grandchildren and five (5) great-grandchildren, embracing family gatherings and events. Their move closer to Ottawa was motivated by a desire to be near family, underscoring their commitment to familial bonds. Kathy's love for gardening and collecting fountains complements Denis's knack for home projects, illustrating their continued collaboration and companionship.

Denis expressed his love for the adventures they share, emphasizing that they "do everything together; we grew up together." This statement encapsulates the essence of their relationship and the foundation they built, reflecting a partnership rooted in love, respect, and shared experiences.

Their journey from rural Kansas to a fulfilling life intertwined with family and adventure showcases the power of commitment, integrity, and joy in living. Their legacy is not only found in the memories they've created and shared but also in the lives they've touched along the way. Such narratives enrich our understanding of the human experience, reminding us of the values that connect us all.



### **Fred Kautt**

Fred was born December 8, 1936 in Lee's Summit, Missouri. He will be 88 in December. He had one (1) brother, Johnnie, who is deceased. His parents both came from Germany in the 1920's. Fred attended school in Johnson County, Martin City and graduated from Grandview High School in 1954.

Fred was in the marines and was stationed at Camp Pendleton in California. He also spent one (1) year of service in Alaska.

Fred was married, divorced and has three (3) daughters. He is now married to Jeannie Kautt and has an adopted son, Benjamin.

His father bought 240 acres of land in Linn County in 1955 for \$10,000. Fred still owns the land. His father raised sheep and row crops (corn and soybeans). Fred and Jeannie raised flowers on the farm and sold to several florists in the Kansas City area. They did that for about 10 years but are no longer raising the flowers.

Fred started working for Hallmark in 1958. He retired in 1995 after working at Hallmark for 37 years. He started out in the cutting department and did not like it. He was thinking about quitting and going back to work on his Dad's farm. He was working the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift and came out of work one day and saw a rainbow shining on the big Hallmark sign. He felt the good lord was giving him a sign. He took out his camera from the car and took a picture. He printed the photo on a 5x7 card and went to the Hallmark office and said he wanted to take pictures for the company. His slogan on the card read "Some people say at the end of a rainbow lies a pot of gold, Hallmark says at the end of the rainbow lies Hallmark". He started working in the photography office and traveled to 49 states taking pictures for Hallmark cards. One time he was in New York and got to take several pictures of Ms. Piggy from the Muppets for the Hallmark cards. He has over 50 photos of Ms. Piggy. His favorite song is by Jim Henson "The Rainbow Connection".

One of Fred's hobbies is collecting ceramic dog planters. The planters are ceramic containers that are shaped like dogs and he has 200 planters. He bought his first dog planter at a flea market in Huntington, WV for \$1.00. He names all the planters and his first one he named "Brownie" because it is a brown color. He found one that was made in Germany and named it "Germie".

Fred is working on a joint project between the Garnett Library and ECKAAA. He will be taking photographs of people and a book that had a significant impact on their lives. The showing will take place at Garnett Library in the months of November and December 2024.



### **Bertie Dinkle**

When I first met Bertie and asked her to spell her name, she told me and then said; “like Dinkle, Dinkle, Little Star”. I knew she would be a fun and interesting person to interview.

Bertie was born March 6, 1929 in Morrisville, Virginia. She is 95 years old and still going strong. I had to get her out of her chair aerobics class to interview her and she came without her shoes! “I have to remember to go back and get my shoes”, she remarked. We finished the interview, and the class was still going so she went back to finish the class and to get her shoes.

Bertie’s ancestry is Irish and German. She had no brothers or sisters and Bertie told me with a smile, she was a brat. Bertie said she and her mother worked in a peach orchard picking peaches when Bertie was young.

Bertie went to work at The Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia when she was about 45 years old. Bertie said she did “history type stuff” for The Pentagon. She did not offer much information about that. Bertie said before working there, she had to cross The Pentagon to catch a bus home. The bus stop was in Fort Myer, which was the previous name used for a U.S. Army post next to Arlington National Cemetery. Bertie said she has never driven a car. Public Transportation through the Senior Center picks her up to bring her to the activities at the center.

When asked about her favorite things Bertie said she likes to read, watch TV and sports. She likes country music. When I was at the Louisburg Senior Center interviewing her, a band was there, Blue River Band, playing for the people at the center. Bertie also said she likes to play Bingo at the center.

When I asked her how she ended up in Louisburg, Kansas, Bertie said her son had moved to Louisburg and she wanted to be close to him and that he lives across the street from her.



### **James “Jim” Payne**

Jim was born in 1948 in San Antonio, Texas. His ancestry is from the United Kingdom and Jim stated his ancestors came to the United States sometime in the 1600's. Jim has two (2) siblings and his parents were Otto and Margaret Payne who were from San Antonio. His grandparents were W.O. “Chief” and Myrtle Payne and Jimmy and Lillian Farwell from Amarillo, Texas. Jim's middle name is Farwell. Jim was raised in San Antonio and started music lessons at the age of four (4). He played in the school bands and was on the football and track teams. Jim grew up in a multicultural environment with classmates of various ethnicities and socio-economic levels. He said it was an amazing time and place to grow up and learn moral and ethical values.

Jim has five (5) children, Julie Reif, Jennifer Chadwick, David Payne, Jason Payne and Rory Sykes. He has four (4) grandchildren, Madison, Hannah, Joey and Dylan and two (2) great grandchildren, Haydyn and McKade.

Jim received his Bachelor of Music Education from North Texas University, Master of Music Education from University of Missouri – Columbia and Doctor of Musical Arts in Trumpet Performance from North Texas University. As you can tell his favorite subject in school was music.

Jim's first job was cleaning his father's office on Saturday's and was supervised by his grandmother. His first career job was as Adjunct Instructor of Trumpet at Midwestern University in Wichita Falls, Texas and Principal Trumpet of Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra. Jim was Professor of Music at the University of Nebraska at Kearney for 40 years.

Jim's favorite type of music is almost any kind, but contemporary or smooth jazz is his favorite. Jim is most proud of teaching thousands of college students to appreciate music and guiding hundreds to seek a career in music education and music business. His life advice would be never stop helping other people be all that they can be.

Jim performs piano concerts of great popular music from the 1900's in a number of styles, ragtime works, memorable hymns, and popular trumpet solos with recorded accompaniments in assisted living centers, nursing homes, and memory care units in east central Kansas and west

central Missouri. He assists the instrument music department in the Paola Public Schools as a clinician, music arranger, and substitute teacher and teaches private music lessons.

Jim is a director of Harvesters at Cross Point Church Food Pantry in Paola which gives out nearly 400,000 pounds of food to 3,000 individuals yearly. Jim is a delegate from Miami County to the Kansas Silver Haired Legislature, on the Board of Directors of the East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging, and an ex-officio member of the Miami County Council on Aging.

Jim has visited twenty-one states and participated in mission trips building churches in Lake Chapala, Mexico and in the Peten Department of Guatemala. He also spent several weeks in Columbia. Jim's favorite location – "Disney World".

When asked what makes him happy and relaxed – sharing my musical performances with people, teaching music, directing the distribution of food to those in need, working for a better life for older Kansans, and spending time with my family. For fun, Jim likes to read, walk, ride his bike and watch football. His favorite holiday is Thanksgiving.

Jim's favorite food is Tex-Mex, of course and his favorite movie is *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy. The invention in his lifetime that most amazed him was the computer. But his great, great uncle voted for deodorant because he was a ranch hand and remembered what the bunkhouse smelled like. The weirdest fad in his life was bell-bottomed guy's pants in the late 1960s.

Jim grew up in the Disciples of Christ denomination and started attending an Assembly of God in 1987. He attends Cross Point Assembly of God in Paola. He is part of Promise Keepers men's spiritual movement from it's beginning to the 2000s. He served as Director of Music and Worship Leader in an Assembly of God church in Nebraska in the 90's. The world event that most impacted his life was the life of Jesus Christ.

When asked how he would like to be remembered – A Godly man who loved his kids and loved his music and served others with his skills.



### **Lois Trebbe**

Lois was born January 14, 1923 and is 101 years old. She grew up in St. Mary's Kansas and went to Rock Creek High School. She had 3 sisters and 2 brothers.

Lois and Leonard Trebbe were married on February 2, 1943. Leonard was in the Army and they got married in Fort Smith, Arkansas by a Justice of Peace. Her husband was in WWII. Lois said that was the saddest time of her life. Leonard was in the service for three (3) years and traveled to Italy, Germany, Belgium and France. Leonard died in 2007 after celebrating 64 years of being together.

They had 2 daughters. One daughter lives in Topeka, Kansas. When they gathered to take a family picture it spanned over 5 generations of people.

Lois once had a job working as a cook for Peterson nursing home. She now lives at Peterson Assisted Living in Osage.

One of her favorite movies is "The Wizard of Oz". She is an indoor person and likes to crochet, knit and read. She doesn't do as much knitting because of her hands but she loves to read and do crossword puzzles. She is currently working on a 1,000 piece puzzle.

Lois had a brother that lived in Utah and she got a chance to go visit him and remarked how beautiful Utah was. Lois liked to attend parades when she was younger. One invention from her lifetime that has amazed her was the telephone. It went from hanging on the wall with a telephone operator to cell phones on which you can talk to several people at once if you want.

Lois said a party was given for her in Valley Falls when she turned 100 and she loved the party. Her life advice would be to appreciate favors that someone has done for you.



### **Frank Mersmann**

Frank Mersmann was born on June 22, 1929, on a small farm east of Richmond, Kansas the son of Fred and Regina Mersmann. He was baptized at St. Therese Catholic Church in Richmond. His family consisted of 6 boys and 2 girls.

Frank attended Silverdale District 68 a one room school which had no electricity or water; drinking water was carried daily from a local nearby farm residence. He attended Richmond Rural High School and graduated in 1947.

As a child Frank recalls a drought which dried up his pond. He decided to rescue the catfish by throwing them into the cistern. When he was trying to retrieve the fish after the drought was over, he fell into the cistern. Luckily his sister heard him and went to get her mother who bailed him out of the cistern by using a bale hook tied to a pole which she hooked on to his suspenders and pulled him out of the water.

Richmond schools did not have school buses, so he purchased a used bike for \$25.00 to ride the 2 ½ miles to school. He sometimes stopped along the way from school to mow yards and work in gardens for elderly women. He also trapped muskrats, opossums and skunks. He skinned the animals himself, stretched and dried the hides and sold them to Sears, Roebucks in Kansas City.

After graduating from high school, he worked for various farmers. He was paid \$5.00 per day and was furnished his noon meal. He was drafted into the Army in January 1951 and was assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for basic training. He was transferred to Camp Chafee, Arkansas for Leadership Training and then to Fort Knox, Kentucky for Officer Training. He was assigned to the 76<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion on the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He served as Platoon Leader, and later assigned as Battalion Intelligence Officer and was promoted to Battalion Adjutant prior to his release from Active Duty in 1953.

Frank and Margie Marie Nichols were united in marriage in Ottawa, Kansas on May 4, 1957. They had 5 children, Christina, Patrick, Douglas, Roger and Scott.



Frank worked for the ATSF Railroad for 12 years. While working for the railroad, he decided to run for a position as a city councilman for Osage City and won the position for a 4-year term. He also served on the USD 420 School Board.

He started working for Osage County Farm Bureau Insurance Agency. In 1969 he was honored with being the outstanding agency of the year of all Farm Bureau Agencies in the State of Kansas. He also won trips to places like Canada, Puerto Rico, and San Diego. Frank was also privileged to go to Washington, DC on the Veterans Honor Flight to view the Veterans memorials, the White House and many other historic sights.

He became involved in the Osage County Fair for 45 years; serving 12 years as President of the Fair Board. He joined Post 198 of the American Legion in Osage City and was a member for over 60 years. He served 12 different years as a Post Commander. He sponsored and played on a men's slow-pitch softball team and a local bowling team. He was a licensed Real Estate Agent and a public Notary and is a paid-up life member of Osage City Chamber of Commerce. He was a lector at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Osage City, which he did for a total of 45 years. He was a member of the Osage City Knights of Columbus for 75 years and served as the Treasurer for 39 years.

He was on the Board of Osage County Commissioners, which he served for 9 years. He served on the board of ECKAN, the East Central Kansas Economic opportunity and on the board of ECKAAA, both of which were located in Ottawa, Kansas. He also served as a member of the Silver Hired Legislature in Topeka.

He helped organize the Osage County Crime Stopper organization. He took over the cleanup and maintenance of the old 9<sup>th</sup> Street Cemetery. He maintained large gardens and planted many trees. His family and friends enjoyed fishing and catching large amounts of Crappie, Channel Catfish, Blue Catfish and Flathead Catfish.

Frank and his wife moved into Peterson Assisted Living in Osage City around 2022. His wife, Margie, passed away on June 25, 2023. Frank stays busy cracking pecans and giving them to friends, family members or anyone he meets, like me his interviewer. He never sells them for money.

Frank was very lucky considering all of his medical problems. He started having heart problems, atrial fibrillation at age 38. His first pacemaker was installed in September of 1992. He had a heart attack with angioplasty in December 1994 open heart surgery in November of 1996 and cardiac ablation in October 2007. He is still able to get around by using a walker or a cane and is still able to attend church with the help of a friend and a wheelchair. He takes a long list of medications but still has a good appetite, so he considers himself very lucky to be as well off as he is. He has had a very active life and hopes it continues for many more years.

## **Build a Healthy Eating Routine as You Get Older**

Good nutrition is key to staying healthy, active and independent as you get older.

Choose a variety of healthy foods such as:

Whole fruits: apples, berries, oranges, and bananas

Whole grains: brown rice, oatmeal, whole-wheat bread

Vegetables: broccoli, sweet potatoes, spinach, black beans, and peppers

Protein foods: lean meats, chicken, eggs, seafood, nuts, and beans

Low-fat or fat-free dairy: milk, yogurt, and cheese

Oils: olive oil, avocado, and oils in foods like seafood

Cut down on added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

Choose water instead of sugary drinks and limit sweet treats like cake, cookies, and candy.

Foods high in saturated fats include whole milk, butter, cheese, and fatty meats.

Sodium comes from salt – and most sodium we eat comes from packaged foods and restaurant meals. Try cooking more at home and flavor foods with herbs and spices instead of salt.

Drink more water! Staying hydrated is important for your health. Try having a glass of water with every meal.

Eating healthy can be more fun with other people! Try sharing healthy meals with friends and family – or look for group meals for older adults at **local meal sites**.

### **ECKAAA meal sites:**

Colony – 339 Cherry, Colony, KS, 620-852-3530

Garnett – 128 W. 5<sup>th</sup> St., Garnett, KS, 785-448-0065

Kincaid – 500 Fifth Ave., Kincaid, KS, 620-439-5449

Burlington – 202 Neosho, Burlington, KS, 620-591-9834

Lebo – 2 W. Broadway, Lebo, KS, 620-256-6166

Waverly – 419 Pearson, Waverly, KS, 785-733-2603

Lane – Voucher program, Please call ECKAAA at 785-242-7200

Ottawa – 1538 Industrial Ave., Ottawa, KS, 785-248-0139

Pomona – 219 Jefferson, Pomona, KS, 785-566-3608

Richmond – 205 Central, Richmond, KS, 785-835-6465

Wellsville – Home delivery, Please call ECKAAA at 785-242-7200

Williamsburg – Home delivery, Please call ECKAAA at 785-242-7200

Blue Mound – 312 E. Main St., Blue Mound, KS, 913-756-2262

Centerville – 410 N. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Centerville, KS, 1-855-396-9674, Ext. 2

Mound City – 603 Main St., Mound City, KS, 1-855-396-9674, Ext. 1

Parker – Home Delivery – Please call ECKAAA at 785-242-7200

Pleasanton – 201 E. 13<sup>th</sup> St., Pleasanton, KS, 913-352-8896

Louisburg – 504 S. Metcalf, Louisburg, KS, 913-837-5113

Osawatomie – 815 6<sup>th</sup> St., Osawatomie, KS, 913-755-2443

Paola – Voucher program, Please call ECKAAA at 785-242-7200

Burlingame – 116 W. Lincoln, Burlingame, KS, 785-893-3425

Carbondale – 228 Main St., Carbondale, KS, 785-893-1107

Osage – 604 Market St., Osage City, KS, 785-528-4170

*Source: ODPHP – Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*

## **Holiday Tips for Caregivers**

The holidays are often filled with opportunities for togetherness, sharing, laughter and memories. But they can also bring stress, disappointment and sadness. A person may feel a special sense of loss during the holidays because of the changes he or she has experienced. At the same time, caregivers may feel overwhelmed maintaining traditions while providing care.

**It's okay to say no.** Even if you've always hosted the family get-together or lovingly prepared a classic dish, if you have new caregiving responsibilities, this year may be different. The first step to avoid feeling overwhelmed when caregiving during the holidays is to be realistic with yourself about your capacity. The second step is to let other people know. Tell friends and family about your limited availability and energy level so other arrangements can be made. This doesn't mean don't celebrate. In fact, it's just the opposite. One of the most important reasons to draw boundaries on what you're able to do is so that you and the person you care for can enjoy the events that you do participate in.

**Communicate.** It can be hard to talk about a parent or spouse's cognitive decline. However, for caregivers who frequently experience burnout, communicating about the realities of the situation is critical for managing stress. Many people don't know how to interact with someone experiencing cognitive decline. Reaching out with a little information in advance of a festive gathering can help everyone feel more comfortable.

First, let people know about any new limitations and encourage them not to correct the person if they misremember a name or event.

Offer tips for gentle ways to introduce oneself-including adding context about how they know the person you're caring for.

Remind them that talking loudly, getting too close or being patronizing could be aggravating.

Finally, suggest fun, ability-appropriate activities that everyone can participate in together.

**Continue to celebrate together.** Making time to celebrate the season can provide caregivers with a feeling of connection and support that isn't always present the rest of the year; and it can be beneficial for the person they care for. Even when you aren't gathered with friends and family, take the opportunity to share meaningful moments and activities with the person you care for. This might include flipping through a photo album and listening to their stories or performing holiday preparations together. Accomplishing small tasks offers those with memory impairment a sense of purpose and control. Even if they are no longer able to actively participate, sensory stimulation like listening to familiar songs, enjoying a favorite holiday treat and watching you decorate can help them anticipate the coming events.

**Adapt traditions.** The holidays are often joyful because they offer a departure from normal daily activities and an opportunity to connect with friends and family. However, large groups and changes in routine can be very difficult for those experiencing cognitive and physical decline. While holidays may not look like they have in the past, traditions can still be honored with thoughtful adaptations. Here are a few ways to make the holidays go smoothly:

**Help the person you care for prepare in advance.** By regularly showing photos and sharing stories about visitors and guests who will be stopping by, these friends and family will feel more familiar when they come to visit.

**Plan activities for when the person is at their best.** If your family usually gathers for holiday dinner but your spouse or parent is at their best around noon, suggest moving the event to lunch.

**Host celebrations in familiar spaces.** While you may not be able to play host, if the person you are caregiving for is most comfortable at home, invite people over and delegate host tasks to family and friends.

**Designate a quiet space.** During the event itself, you can help reduce agitation by making sure there's a quiet place where your parent or spouse can safely retreat to rest or accept visitors one-on-one. You can also plan to break up the festivities with quieter, routine activities such as a short walk or reading in another room.

Trying to ensure the person you're caring for is comfortable will reduce agitation and improve their mood making celebrating better for everyone.

**Ask for help.** While it can be tempting to try to take on everything, assistance is key to providing care for the long haul. Fortunately, the holidays provide the perfect time to ask for help wherever you may need it. Consider enlisting a family member to take over caregiving duties so you can attend a party with friends. Or if you just need a little help with errands or chores, you can hire a personal assistant or housekeeper for a few hours to help you stay caught up with daily tasks. Your local community or state may offer resources, like adult daycare, or respite. So, you can take care of personal matters or enjoy a moment of rest.

**Care for yourself.** It can be difficult for many care givers to care for themselves. Sometimes this is due to feelings of guilt or concerns that no one else can do the job as well as they can. Either way, making sure your needs are met is the only way to ensure you can continue to meet the needs of others. While care giving during the holidays, offer yourself the small kindness of simplifying tasks. If your family exchanges gifts, consider purchasing them online, ask a friend to wrap them or simply get gift cards. If you decorate homemade cookies every year, consider getting a mix or kit. In addition to reducing your load, sometimes you need to take a break from it altogether. Whether it's the holidays or not, designate a time to see friends, hit the gym or get a massage. It's also okay to take a vacation. When you're ready for a reset, consider short-term stays in furnished rooms with full-time staff on site. This provides a healthy social lifestyle for older adults as well as respite for their caregivers.

**Caregivers and the holidays.** Resentment can spoil even the best celebration. That's why it's important to show empathy to yourself and the person you care for during the busy holiday season and all year long. Start by identifying your limits and communicating them to others. Setting clear expectations will help everyone adapt. Traditions may also need to be adjusted so the person you care for can participate comfortably. Finally, accept help and take care of yourself.



117 S. Main St.

Ottawa, KS 66067

Check out our webpage or find us on Facebook!

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Phone: (785) 242-7200 or (800)-633-5621

**ECKAAA WILL BE CLOSED THE FOLLOWING DATES: Thursday, November 28, Friday, November 29, Wednesday, December 25, Thursday, December 26, 2024 and Wednesday, January 1, 2025.**

**We are heading into the bad weather season, ECKAAA posts nutrition site closings on the following: Our Facebook page, KOFO Radio, KCTV 5, KMBC 9, WIBW, KSNT 27**