

May Is Older Americans Month

(KAIR)--Each year for the past five decades, the month of May has been set aside to recognize the different issues related to older Americans.

According to Bev Sunderman with the Northeast Kansas Agency on Aging, it is a time to celebrate the contributions older Americans have provided over the years. Sunderman says the recognition started in the 1960's when the older population was not as large as it is today, and the need to provide for older Americans was realized. She says that only about 17 million Americans had reached their sixty fifth birthday in 1963. About a third of them were living in poverty, and there were not many programs available to meet their needs.

Sunderman says May is also a opportune time for agencies such as hers to provide older people with vital information that would keep them healthy and active. They are focusing on raising awareness on the critical issues of unintentional injury facing older adults. Some of these issues include falls, fires, motor vehicle incidents, and consumer product related incidents.

Sunderman says there are some simple steps that can be taken to minimize or even eliminate most of these problems. For example, she encourages older adults to take control of their situation and talk to their health care provider about the best kinds of physical activity for them. They can also have their vision check and ensure that their homes have ample lighting. Also, handrails installed in the home would help prevent falls.

The Northeast Kansas Agency on Aging has many programs and a lot of information available to assist seniors. If you would like more information on how they can help you or a loved one, they can be reached by calling 785-742-7152, or 1-800-883-2547.

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