



**Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas**

It is projected that 10,000 baby boomers in the United States turn 65 until 2030. In the Southwind Extension District, 9,636 citizens are eligible for Medicare. Health insurance choices affect all citizens and many do not understand health insurance or Medicare. Households can save money by making informed decisions, which can alleviate stress and conserve funds.

Throughout the year and during Open Enrollment, Southwind District conducts health insurance education, both one-on-one and in group settings about Medicare benefits. The adult development agent also educates beneficiaries about low income subsidy and Medicare Savings program, too.

The audience includes:

- Current Medicare beneficiaries age 65 or older and individuals with a disability;
- Individuals turning 65;
- Caregivers and family members;
- People with various incomes.

During the 2016 Medicare Part D Open enrollment period for the Southwind District:

- 101 individuals had plan comparisons completed
- 41 changed their plan for 2017.
- \$74,936 in premiums and medication costs were saved by Southwind District seniors choosing more cost effective insurance coverage.

A client new to Medicare said she learned “How to get through the twists and turns of social security” and “I am thankful for a program that has someone you can talk to who has no agenda or will not profit by steering you in a direction you can’t afford.”



There were a number of Master Gardener volunteer service projects that happened in Southwind Extension District communities in 2016. This year, 1180 hours of volunteer service were completed by 30 Master Gardeners. According to most recent data from the Independent Sector (a coalition of charities, foundations, corporations, and individuals that publishes research important to the nonprofit sector), the estimated value of volunteer time is \$23.56 per hour. That calculates to \$27,800 worth of service to our local communities! Projects were completed in Humboldt, Iola, Moran, Chanute and Fort Scott.

Southwind Extension Master Gardeners conducted research trials on tomatoes varieties in the Fort Scott Community Garden and conducted trials on both sweet and hot peppers at the Elm Creek Community Garden in Iola. The gardeners observed and recorded plant and fruit characteristics of each variety. The varieties were rated throughout the growing season on plant vigor, disease resistance, fruit yield, uniformity and cracking. All plants were labeled so the general public could see the variety names. The trial data is compiled, submitted to Kansas State University and ultimately shared with seed companies. As part of the Prairie Star program (list of recommended annual flowers for Kansas), annual flowers were trialed in the Allen County Courthouse flower beds. This is a highly visible location and many individuals walking through the courthouse square inquired with the Master Gardener in charge of the trial for more information. The information gathered from this trial was used to make selections for the 2017 Prairie Star list.



# VFD

Understanding the  
Veterinary Feed Directive

Effective January 1, 2017, medically important feed-grade antimicrobial drugs will no longer be labeled for growth promotion. Many antibiotics now available over the counter for use in feed will require authorization from a veterinarian in the form of a veterinary feed directive (VFD). A VFD is a written statement authorizing the use of a medically important antibiotic in or on the feed, including and milk replacer.

The Southwind District of K-State Research and Extension has utilized many outlets to insure that farmers and rancher in Allen, Bourbon, and Neosho Counties are informed about these changes. Reminders with links to detailed information have been placed on our Facebook page. Letters have mailed to area veterinary clinics and feed dealers. Information is posted on the Southwind website located at [www.southwind.ksu.edu](http://www.southwind.ksu.edu), under the livestock tab. In September of 2016, a meeting co-hosted by the Southwind Extension District and the Bourbon and Allen County Chapters of the Kansas Livestock Association, was held in Uniontown, Kansas featuring Kansas State University veterinarian Dr. Gregg Hanzlicek. Dr. Hanzlicek explained the details of the VFD to a full crowd of Southwind District livestock producers. Additionally, local feed dealerships in the district held similar meetings in order to spread the information.

## Kansas Youth Leadership



Anyone can be a leader, and 4-H aims to develop each member into a positive, competent leader. Leaders use their personal knowledge, skills, and influence to establish relationships with people and help others meet goals. Leaders become effective by modeling the skills and characteristics they seek to pass on to others. They acquire trust by being a person of good character, and they achieve power by empowering others. Leaders need to understand the importance of diversity and possess a variety of leadership styles along with the knowledge of how to apply each.

Southwind 4-H'ers attended the 17th Annual Kansas Youth Leadership Forum (KYLFF) the weekend before Thanksgiving at the Rock Springs 4-H Center, Junction City. KYLFF is a weekend filled with lots of networking with 4-H'ers from across the State of Kansas, learning important leadership skills, and hearing motivating words from guest speaker Kelly Green. In conjunction with KYLFF, the Kansas Volunteer Forum was held and a Southwind volunteer and club leader attended that Forum learning different leadership tips and suggestions for working with youth in his 4-H club and across the district.

## Grant Funding with Frontier Farm Credit

Through the *Working Here Fund*, Frontier Farm Credit has set aside grant funds for projects and organizations that make a positive impact in eastern Kansas. The option of up to \$2,000 in grant funds is available for projects that address short-term goals, and could include projects such as, but not limited to, community gardens, 4-H and FFA chapter projects, and foodbank needs. The Southwind District was fortunate to receive two of these grants for a combined total of \$3880. In Erie, this project will help 4-H families residing within the city limits by providing shelter for animals. If the burden of building or purchasing an animal shelter is solved, then more families will hopefully become involved in animal projects. The proposal is to build and purchase portable animal shelters that 4-H families can take to their homes and use for the 4-H season. In Iola, there is an initiative to update the county fairgrounds which were constructed over 50 years ago through volunteers and donated materials. In partnership with the Allen County Fair Board and Allen County 4-H Council, the concession stand will be the first building to see improvements thanks to the generous donations by Frontier Farm Credit.

## Southwind Extension District

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