

FEBRUARY 2025



Live Well. Age Well.

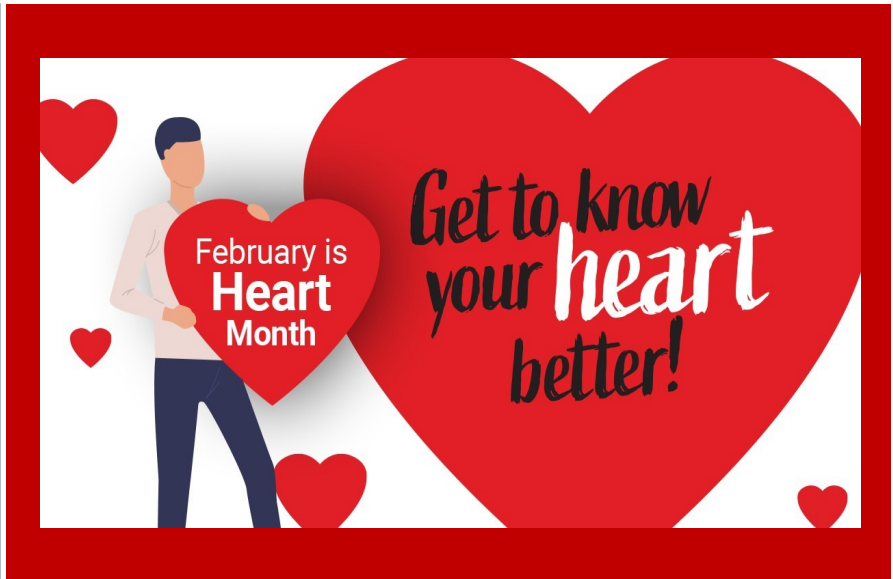
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Leavenworth, KS 66048  
Phone: 913.684.0777  
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# THE SOURCE

COUNCIL ON AGING

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## Our Programs

- Attendant Support
- Chore Assistance
- Errand & Shopping Support
- Information & Assistance
- Legal Service
- Leisure & Learning Program
- Nutrition Program
- Pets & Loving Seniors Program (PALS)
- Pet2Vet Program
- Senior Health Insurance Counseling
- Social Services
- Support Groups
- Telephone & Visiting Support
- Senior Express Transportation

## Random Acts of Kindness Day: February 17, 2025

# make kindness the norm

randomactsofkindness.org

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOUNDATION

**“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”  
- Maya Angelou**

Imagine a world where you can succeed by being nice.  
Where we all pay it forward.  
Where people look out for each other.  
It all starts with an act.

- ♥ Visit a senior and deliver a kind surprise.
- ♥ Visit the nearest little library and donate a book.
- ♥ Write a handwritten letter and mail it.
- ♥ Write positive messages on sticky notes and leave for others to find.
- ♥ Donate blood.
- ♥ Leave quarters at the laundromat or vending machine.
- ♥ Praise a local business online.

Share with us your random acts of kindness on our Facebook page on February 17th. Help share ideas and make kindness the norm. [www.facebook.com/lvcountycoa](http://www.facebook.com/lvcountycoa)

**FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup> - MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>**

# **VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE VITA**

VITA Tax preparation is provided by the Leavenworth County Council on Aging to qualifying seniors free of charge. To qualify, you must:

- ⇒ be a Leavenworth County resident and
- ⇒ be 60 years or older with income less than \$67,000 with no farm or rental income.
- ⇒ Other restrictions may apply.

VITA services are not only free, they are also a reliable and trusted source for preparing tax returns. All VITA volunteers who prepare returns must take and pass tax law training that meets or exceeds IRS standards. This training includes maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all taxpayer information. All VITA prepared tax returns go through a required quality review check prior to filing.

 **Call Dena at 913.364.5204 to reserve your appointment time today!**



**Tax services will be offered by appointment at the following locations:**

Council on Aging, Leavenworth  
Basehor Library  
Linwood Library  
Tonganoxie Library  
Easton Bank Exchange


### **WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING:**

- Valid photo identification. If you have questions about the acceptable forms of identification, contact Jessica at 913.684.0733.
- Social Security Card
- 2024 tax documents (i.e. SSA-1099R, W-2, Real Estate Property Tax Statement, CSA or CSF-1099)
- bank information for direct deposit or direct debit (prefer a voided check to copy)
- prior year's (2023) tax envelope

## COUNCIL ON AGING



 711 Marshall St., Suite 100  
Leavenworth, KS 66048

 913.684.0777

 [seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov)

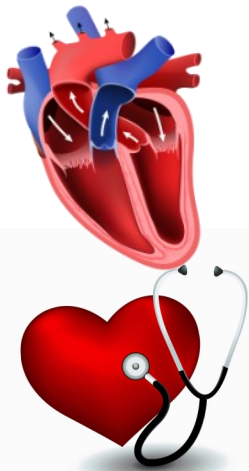
 [www.leavenworthcounty.gov/COA](http://www.leavenworthcounty.gov/COA)

# FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH MONTH

## How Your Heart Changes With Age

Aging causes changes in the heart and blood vessels. Here are some of the changes that could occur:

- ◆ As you get older, your heart can't beat as fast during physical activity or times of stress. However, a person's resting heart rate – the number of heartbeats per minute at rest – does not change significantly with normal aging.
- ◆ You may feel a fluttering in your chest or have the feeling that your heart is skipping a beat or beating too hard. Occasional extra or skipped heartbeats may occur more often with increased age and are not dangerous. However, more frequent and/or persistent feelings that your heart is fluttering or racing may be signs of a heart rhythm abnormality (arrhythmia), which may require treatment.
- ◆ Over time, the chambers of your heart may increase in size. The heart wall thickens, so the amount of blood that a chamber can hold may decrease, despite the increased overall heart size. Increased thickness of the heart wall can increase the risk of atrial fibrillation, a common heart rhythm problem in older people that can increase the risk of a stroke.



- ◆ The valves that control blood flow between the chambers of the heart may become thicker and stiffer. Stiffer valves can limit the flow of blood out of the heart or become leaky, both of which can cause fluid to build up in the lungs or in the legs, feet, and abdomen.

Changes in the heart and blood vessels that happen with age may increase a person's risk of heart disease and related health problems. Heart disease is a major cause of disability that can limit activity and erode quality of life for older people. Talk with a doctor if you have any concerns about your heart as you age.

Some risk factors for heart disease may also be linked to cognitive health, including a person's risk of dementia later in life. The good news is there are things you can do, such as [controlling your blood pressure](#), that may help delay or lower your risk. Taking better care of your overall cardiovascular health can help protect both your brain and your heart.

To learn more about heart health, different types of heart disease, heart-healthy living, and questions you can ask your doctor about your risk for heart disease, go to [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov).



## Check your blood pressure and cholesterol

As you get older, it's important to have your blood pressure and cholesterol levels checked regularly, even if you are healthy.

High blood pressure could lead to [stroke](#) and problems with your heart, [eyes](#), brain, and [kidneys](#). [High cholesterol](#) can also lead to serious health problems, such as a heart attack, cardiac arrest, or stroke. Talk to a doctor about exercise, dietary changes, and medications that can help manage your blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

# Senior Rebate Program Available For Those Who Qualify

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FROM  
FEBRUARY 1, 2025 THRU APRIL 15, 2025.

## FEBRUARY 1, 2025

The City of Leavenworth has a program that pays sewer and trash bills for low income senior citizens who qualify. Those who are interested should fall below a specific income and complete an application process.

In order to qualify, citizens must:

- ⇒ Be a resident of the City of Leavenworth, Kansas.
- ⇒ Be 62 years old or older at the time of application.
- ⇒ Be a primary occupant of a residence. Water bill must bear applicant's name.
- ⇒ Gross income, including that of a spouse or any residents living at the address, cannot exceed the following limits, determined by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development:

1 Person	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons	6 Persons	7 Persons	8 Persons
\$36,100	\$41,250	\$46,400	\$51,550	\$55,700	\$59,800	\$63,950	\$68,050

Senior citizens interested in applying can visit Leavenworth City Hall, City Clerk's Office 100 N. Fifth St., from [February 1, 2025 through April 15, 2025](#).

**Take Note !**  
Applicants should bring:

- Income verification for the year 2024 from all income sources, such as 2024 Income Tax Returns, 2024 Homestead Claim or Social Security Statements and 1099 forms.
- Proof of age, such as birth certificate or Driver's license if not currently a program participant.
- Water bill or copy of water bill.

**The City will pay** monthly sewer and refuse (trash service) charges for those who meet the qualifications and complete the application process. Program participants will receive a water bill with monthly sewer and refuse charges marked "Senior Rebate."



As part of the Council on Aging VITA program, residents can also complete a Senior Rebate application during their tax appointment. Applications will be taken to the City Clerk's office for processing.



To remain on the rebate program, residents must apply each year.

**NOTE:** City Clerks staff does not assist with completing tax forms.

For transportation assistance, please contact the COA Senior Express Transportation Department at 913.684.0778, or use the Ride LV Micro Transit. Be sure to allow 2-3 days' notice for transportation services.

**APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER APRIL 15, 2025 WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

# NUTRITION CORNER

## FOOD SAFETY

### People at Risk: Older Adults

Adults aged 65 and older are more likely to be hospitalized or die from foodborne illness. This increased risk of foodborne illness is because organs and body systems go through changes as people age:



- The body's immune response to disease grows weaker.
- The gastrointestinal tract holds onto food for a longer period of time, allowing bacteria to grow.
- The liver and kidneys may not properly rid the body of foreign bacteria and toxins.
- The stomach may not produce enough acid. The acidity helps to reduce the number of bacteria in our intestinal tract.
- Underlying chronic conditions, such as diabetes and cancer, may also increase a person's risk of foodborne illness.

[Download the FDA's guide to Food Safety for Older Adults and People with Cancer, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, Organ Transplants, and Autoimmune Diseases.](#)

[Download the USDA's Food Safety: A Need-to-Know Guide for Those At-Risk.](#)

### Choose Safer Food

Learn about safer food choices for older adults who have a higher risk of getting very sick from foodborne germs, such as Listeria. If you are 65 or older, or prepare food for someone who is, always follow the four steps:

**CLEAN:** Wash hands, utensils and surfaces often. Germs can spread and survive in many places.

**SEPARATE:** Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can spread germs to ready-to-eat foods, so keep them separate.

**COOK:** Food is safely cooked only when the internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that can make you sick.

**CHILL:** Refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours. If the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F (32°C) (like a hot car or picnic), refrigerate it within 1 hour.

*Source: FoodSafety.gov, 09/2023*

## VOLUNTEER WITH MEALS ON WHEELS

- Do you have 90 minutes during the week? (late morning)
- Do you like meeting new people?
- Do you want to help those in our community?
- Do you drive?

**The Meals on Wheels solution starts with the meal... and delivers on so much more.**

### SERVICES PROVIDED:



**100%** provide socialization opportunities



**97%** train drivers to keep an eye out for senior wellbeing



**88%** train drivers to keep an eye out for safety issues around the clients' home



**66%** connect seniors to services in the community when needs are identified

If you would like to be a Meals on Wheels volunteer, contact

Dawn Owens at the *Council on Aging*.

Phone: 913.684.0786

Email [dowens@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:dowens@leavenworthcounty.gov)

\*All Meals on Wheels volunteers must be able to pass a criminal background check.



**MEALS on WHEELS**

**Want to donate to the Leavenworth Meals on Wheels Program?**

Stop by the COA or call our office to find out how you can help!

## Cold Weather Tips for Pets

### Paw Protection

Daily walks in the cold can harm your dog's paws. Keep them moisturized to protect against salt and chemical agents.

Use pet booties to minimize contact with painful salt crystals, poisonous anti-freeze and chemical ice-melting agents.



Apply a dollop of petroleum jelly to their paw pads before going outside.



ASPCA

## Cold Weather Tips for Pets

### Check Before You Rev

Outdoor stray and feral cats sometimes sleep under car hoods to stay warm. But a car's fan belt can injure or kill a cat when the motor starts. To avoid a tragic accident: **bang loudly on your hood before starting the engine** to give any cats a chance to escape.



ASPCA

## Cold Weather Tips for Pets

### Winter Coats

#### Do

Consider a coat or sweater for shorthaired breeds. Coverage from the base of the tail to the belly provides extra warmth.



#### Don't

Closely shave your dog in the winter. Longer coats mean more warmth.



ASPCA

## PET SERVICES TIP OF THE MONTH

Cold weather can be dangerous and uncomfortable for our furry friends, but there are some things you can do to protect your pets from the winter freeze.

**KNOW THEIR LIMITS:** Tolerance for cold weather can vary from pet to pet based on several factors. Be aware of your pet's needs and adjust accordingly. You may want to shorten their walks or offer extra warmth by dressing them in coats and booties. No pet should be left outside for long periods of time in below freezing temps. If keeping a pet indoors is not an option, make sure they have shelter that keeps them out of the wind with warm bedding and access to fresh, non-frozen water.

**CHECK BEFORE YOU DRIVE:** Warm vehicles can be inviting for outdoor cats. Always bang on the hood and honk your horn before starting your engine to avoid injuring a potential stowaway.

**WELLNESS CHECKS:** Just like us, cold weather can worsen some medical conditions like arthritis in pets. Visit your veterinarian at least once a year to monitor and treat health issues.

**PROVIDE CHOICES:** Just like you, pets prefer comfortable sleeping places and may change their location based on their need for more or less warmth. Give them some safe options to allow them to vary their sleeping place to adjust to their needs.

**RECOGNIZE PROBLEMS:** If your pet is whining, shivering, seems anxious, slows down or stops moving, seems weak, or starts looking for warm places to burrow, get them back inside quickly because they are showing signs of hypothermia. Frostbite is harder to detect, and may not be fully recognized until a few days after the damage is done. If you suspect your pet has hypothermia or frostbite, consult your veterinarian immediately.

**FEED WELL:** Keep your pet at a healthy weight throughout the winter. Some pet owners feel that a little extra weight gives their pet some extra protection from cold, but the health risks associated with that outweigh any potential benefits. Watch your pet's body condition and keep them in the healthy range. Outdoor pets will require more calories in the winter to generate enough body heat and energy to keep them warm – talk to your veterinarian about your pet's nutritional needs during cold weather.

Source: American Veterinary Medical Association & ASPCA, retrieved 01/2025

## SILVER HAired LEGISLATURE ELECTIONS

The Silver Haired Legislature will hold its elections in February 2025! Positions are held for two year terms. The Silver Haired Legislature was created by an Act of Congress in 1969 and each state was encouraged to create a body of Seniors who would identify issues important to older Kansans who are 60 year of age or older. The Kansas Silver Haired Legislature (KSHL) was created by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1649, which was passed by the 1982 Legislature. It created a unicameral legislature composed of 125 representatives. All are 60+ years old and are elected from their county of residence.

### Silver Haired Legislators must meet the following qualifications:

- ◆ Be at least age 60 when filing for candidacy.
- ◆ Be a resident of the county in which candidacy is sought.
- ◆ Be willing to participate in all activities required and expected of Kansas Silver Haired Legislators – Which includes attending regional caucus in April/May and the annual meeting and the KSHL’s legislative session in October.



### Required Statement of Willingness to Serve:

Each candidate for the Silver Haired Legislature in the Wyandotte/Leavenworth AAA region must indicate their willingness to serve by completing the Candidate Registration and the Notice of Intent forms. Those forms should be returned to the Area Agency on Aging by 5pm on Wednesday, February 12, 2025.

### Credential Requirement:

Candidates must complete either of the following requirements and submit to the Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging by Friday, February 14, 2025.

- ◆ Obtain 50 signatures on the Petition of Nomination Form of those age 60 or older who are also registered voters in your county.
- ◆ Pay a \$25 filing fee. If you prefer to pay the filing fee, please make your check payable to the Kansas Silver Haired Legislature and return it to the Area Agency on Aging (We will forward this check to the KSHL Treasurer).

The Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging will send notifications by mail to candidates who are certified for election. If there is more than one candidate from your county, there will be an election held on Thursday, March 13, 2025. This Certification Letter will announce the polling location and time, if an election is required.

Should you be interested in becoming a Kansas Silver Haired Legislator, you may obtain the required documents by contacting the Area Agency on Aging at 913-573-8531.

## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**FEB 3rd**  
**Monday**  
**12 - 4pm**

### Red Cross Blood Drive

Make an appointment at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org), on the donor app, or walk-ins are welcome.

**FEB 11th**  
**Tuesday**  
**12pm**

**@ Tonganoxie**  
**Library**

### Knowledge @ Noon: Love the Groundhog

Will the groundhog see his shadow this year? We aren't sure, but we know that he can't do it on an empty stomach! Join us for recipes inspired by this folklore.

**FEB 13th**  
**Thursday**  
**9am - 12pm**

### Kansas Talking Books Roadshow

Are you or a loved one experiencing difficulty reading traditional print due to age, vision loss, or other physical challenges? Kansas Talking Books is here to help. This program offers FREE access to a vast library of audiobooks, magazines, and news sources, ensuring that everyone can continue to enjoy reading.

**FEB 19th**  
**Wednesday**  
**1 - 4pm**

### University of Saint Mary Health Fair

Physical Therapy students from the University of Saint Mary will host a health fair at the COA offering a variety of ways to improve health. Drop in anytime from 1:00-4:00pm; no cost.





To be added to our email distribution list, please contact us @[seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov)



For our full events and activities calendar, visit our homepage @[Council on Aging](http://Council on Aging)



**FOLLOW US ON  
FACEBOOK**



CLICK HERE TO BE DIRECTED TO OUR PAGE.

### AGING RESOURCES

- Adult Protective Services.....1.800.922.5330
- Emergency Respite:
  - Country Care.....913.773.5517
  - Medical Lodge.....913.772.1844
- Guidance Center.....913.682.5118
- Kansas Aging and Disability Resource Center  
.....855.200.2372
- Leavenworth County Health Department  
.....913.250.2000
- Medicare ..... 1.800.633.4227
- Poison Control Center.....1.800.222.1222
- Property Fraud LV County.....1.913.684.0424
- Social Security Office .....1.800.772.1213
- Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area Agency on Aging  
..... 913.573.8531

To best accommodate all of our clients, the COA is set to take payments and donations online through **PayPal**.

Scan the QR code or in PayPal search for **Leavenworth County Council on Aging** or use **@LVCOA**



Some services are funded in part by the Older Americans Act and are provided without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origins or sex. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with the Area Agency on Aging @ 1.888.661.1444

This informational brochure is published by:  
Leavenworth County Council on Aging

Editor: Jessica Pontbriant

Director: Connie Harmon

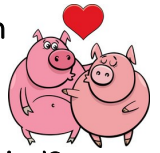
Email: [seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov)

Website: [Council on Aging \(leavenworthcounty.gov\)](http://Council on Aging (leavenworthcounty.gov))

## A LITTLE HUMOR

**Q: What did the farmer give his wife on Valentine's Day?**

A: Hogs and kisses



**Q: Why did the bee get married?**

A. He found his honey.

**Q. How do tax accountants deal with stress?**

A: They count to ten, deduct it, and carry on!



## FUN FACTS

- I. Humans are the only animals that blush.
- II. There's only one letter that doesn't appear in any U.S. state name. "Q"
- III. Maine is the only state that has a one-syllable name.
- IV. The dot over the lowercase "i" is called a tittle.
- V. Cookie Monster is named Sid.
- VI. The first hot air balloon ride contained a sheep, duck, and rooster.
- VII. Lobster bladders are in their heads.
- VIII. Chinese Checkers was invented in Germany.
- IX. The bee hummingbird drinks from up to 1,500 flowers a day.
- X. The plural of cul-de-sac is culs-de-sac.
- XI. A group of stingrays is called a fever.

Source: [Factretriever.com](http://Factretriever.com), 08/2020; & [Bestlifeonline.com](http://Bestlifeonline.com), 03/2021

Have feedback or suggestions about the COA's programs and services?

You can reach us by:

Email - [seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov](mailto:seniors1st@leavenworthcounty.gov)

Drop box - Located in the COA's reception area.

Call - Connie Harmon at 913.684.0784.