

PRIME TIMES

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Celebrating and Preserving Independence

by Michael Colaw, Development Director

Each July, Americans pause to celebrate Independence Day, a time to reflect on the freedoms and opportunities we enjoy as citizens of this great nation. We gather with family and friends, enjoy cookouts and fireworks, and remember the sacrifices made by those who secured and protected our liberty.

While independence means something different to each of us, it often becomes even more meaningful as we age. The ability to make our own decisions, remain in our homes, stay connected to our communities, and continue living life on our own terms is something many of us deeply value. Independence is more than a privilege; it is a vital part of our quality of life.

At Elder Care, preserving independence is at the heart of everything we do.

For more than four decades, Elder Care has helped aging adults and adults with disabilities remain active, healthy, and engaged in the communities they call home. Through services such as case management, in-home assistance, adult day health, outpatient therapy, caregiver support, transportation, benefits counseling, and wellness programs, we work alongside individuals and families to create solutions that support independence and dignity.

Sometimes maintaining independence means recovering strength after an illness or injury. Other times it means having a trusted professional help coordinate services, provide caregiver support, or connect someone with community resources. Whatever the need, our goal remains the same:



helping people continue living safely and confidently in the place they most want to be; at home.

This Independence Day, as we celebrate the freedoms that define our nation, we also celebrate the personal independence that allows each of us to live meaningful and fulfilling lives. We are honored to partner with so many individuals and families throughout our community, providing the support they need to remain independent for as long as possible.

From all of us at Elder Care, we wish you a safe, joyful, and meaningful Fourth of July. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey toward healthy, active, and independent living.

Elder Care To Launch Volunteer Chaperone Program

by Deanna Dodson, Director of Client Services

At Elder Care, we believe that no one should have to face a medical appointment alone. That's why we are excited to introduce our new Volunteer Chaperone Program, designed to help aging adults and adults with disabilities safely access the healthcare they need while maintaining their independence.

Many aging adults in our community can arrange transportation to a medical appointment, but still face a significant challenge: having someone accompany them through the process. Some appointments require assistance with check-in, support during long wait times, or a trusted person to help review written instructions after a procedure. For individuals who live alone, no longer drive, or have family members who live far away or work during the day, these situations can create barriers to receiving essential care.

Our Volunteer Chaperone Program will provide trained volunteers who offer door-through-door support for non-emergency medical appointments and outpatient procedures. Volunteers may assist participants from their home to the vehicle, accompany them through the medical facility, provide companionship during appointments, and help ensure they return home safely. Volunteers do not provide medical care; instead, they offer encouragement, reassurance, and practical support throughout the experience.

The program will serve aging adults and adults with disabilities throughout Washington, Nowata, and Osage Counties. Our goal is to reduce missed appointments, decrease loneliness and stress, and

help individuals remain healthy, independent, and connected to their communities.

We're also looking for compassionate individuals who want to make a meaningful difference. Volunteer chaperones will receive training and ongoing support from Elder Care staff. Whether you're retired, a college student, a working professional, or simply someone with a heart for serving others, this is a wonderful opportunity to give back to your community.

If you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Chaperone or would like to learn more about the program, please contact Elder Care at 918-336-8500 or email us at care@abouteldercare.org. A few hours of your time could make all the difference in helping a neighbor access the care they need while aging with dignity and independence.



Lori Fullbright Coming to Elder Care

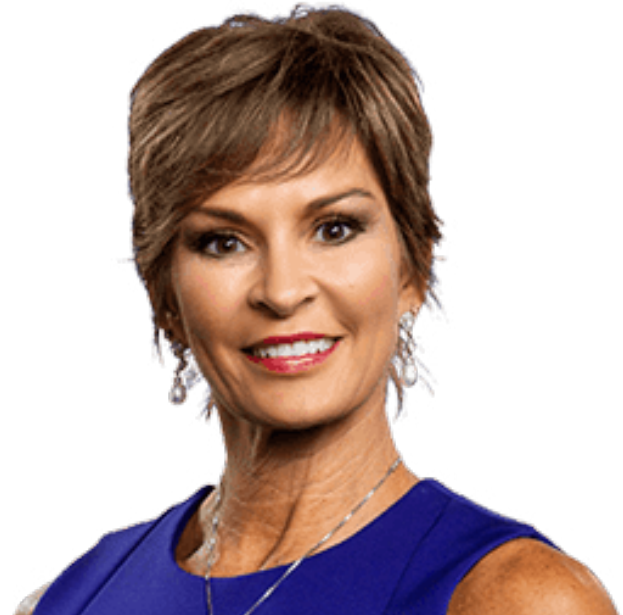
by Michael Colaw, Development Director

Technology has made it easier than ever to stay connected with family and friends, but unfortunately, it has also made it easier for scammers to target unsuspecting victims. Every day, older adults receive fraudulent text messages, emails, phone calls, and social media messages designed to steal personal information, gain access to financial accounts, or convince victims to send money.

Many scams begin with a sense of urgency. You may receive a text claiming your bank account has been compromised, an email stating you owe money to the IRS, or a social media message from someone pretending to be a friend in need. Others may offer prizes, sweepstakes winnings, or investment opportunities that seem too good to be true. In nearly every case, the goal is the same: to create panic or excitement that causes you to act before thinking.

The best defense against scams is awareness. Never click on suspicious links, provide personal information to someone you do not know, or send money based solely on a phone call, text, or online message. When in doubt, contact the organization directly using a verified phone number or website. Taking a few extra moments to verify information can prevent significant financial loss and emotional stress.

To help our community stay informed and protected, Elder Care is excited to welcome Lori Fullbright, Crime Prevention Specialist for



KOTV-News on 6, on Wednesday, July 9, at 1:00 PM at the EC Active Center. Lori is nationally recognized for her engaging presentations on crime prevention and personal safety and will share valuable information about the latest cons, frauds, and scams targeting older adults.

This free presentation will provide practical tips for recognizing scams, protecting your personal information, and responding appropriately when suspicious messages or requests arise. Whether you use email, social media, text messaging, or simply want to stay informed, this presentation offers valuable information for everyone.

Space is limited, so we encourage you to reserve your seat today by calling Elder Care at (918) 336-8500. Join us and learn how to protect yourself and your loved ones from becoming victims of fraud.

New Support Group for Grandparents

by Michael Colaw, Development Director

For many grandparents, retirement looks different from what they once imagined. Instead of enjoying a slower pace of life, thousands of grandparents across the country find themselves stepping back into a parenting role and providing stability, guidance, and love to grandchildren who need them most.

While raising grandchildren can be one of life's greatest blessings, it can also bring unique challenges. From navigating school systems and healthcare decisions to managing finances and balancing personal health needs, grandparents raising grandchildren often face responsibilities they never expected to take on later in life.

At Elder Care, we understand that this journey can sometimes feel overwhelming. That's why we are pleased to introduce a new Grandparents Raising Grandkids Support Group, designed to provide encouragement, education, and connection for grandparents who are serving as primary caregivers for their grandchildren.

This free monthly support group will meet on the second Thursday of each month at 11:00 a.m. and will be facilitated by Tiffany Roach of Comforting Hands Hospice. Participants will have the opportunity to share experiences, discuss challenges, learn about available resources, and connect with others who understand the joys and struggles of raising grandchildren.

One of the most valuable aspects of a support group is knowing you are not alone. Whether you have recently taken on the responsibility of caring

for a grandchild or have been doing so for years, this group offers a welcoming environment where you can find support, practical information, and meaningful friendships.

At Elder Care, our mission is to help individuals maintain independence, dignity, and quality of life. We recognize that grandparents raising grandchildren often need support just as much as the children in their care. Through this new group, we hope to provide a place where caregivers can recharge, gain valuable insights, and find reassurance that help is available.

If you are a grandparent raising a grandchild, or know someone who is, we invite you to join us. Together, we can navigate the challenges, celebrate the successes, and build a supportive community for families of all ages.

For more information, contact Elder Care at (918) 336-8500.



Stay Active, Connected, and Informed This Summer

by Claudia Dilbeck, Director of Community Relations & Outreach

Summer is the perfect time to stay engaged, learn something new, and connect with friends. And, the EC Active Center has something for everyone!

Our weekly fitness and wellness activities continue to help aging adults stay active and healthy. Join us for Gentle Yoga, Tai Chi, and Cardio Drumming, all designed to improve balance, flexibility, strength, and overall well-being in a welcoming environment. Whether you are looking to maintain your fitness or simply enjoy moving with friends, these classes are a great place to start.

In addition to our weekly offerings, we host a variety of monthly activities that provide opportunities to socialize and learn new skills. Popular favorites include Bingo, Cooking & Crafting, and our Socially Savvy Seniors class. This engaging technology-focused class helps participants navigate social media safely, recognize online scams, protect personal information, and stay connected with family and friends in the digital world.

Looking for a fun night out? Join us for Dinner with Friends on the first Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. For just \$15 per person, participants enjoy a delicious meal, great conversation, and the chance to build new friendships while reconnecting with familiar faces.

We are also excited to continue our "Did You Know?" educational series, generously sponsored by Comforting Hands Hospice. These informative presentations cover topics that many aging adults encounter, including healthy aging, caregiving

resources, advance directives, memory concerns, medication management, and other important issues that can help individuals and families plan for the future.

Mark your calendar for our Summer Safety Series presented by the Washington County Sheriff's Department on July 21 at 2:00 p.m. This important session will focus on emergency preparedness and provide practical guidance on what to do if you ever find yourself in an active shooter situation. The presentation is designed to help participants feel more prepared and confident in responding to unexpected emergencies.

No matter your interests, the EC Active Center offers opportunities to stay active, informed, and connected throughout the summer. For more information about activities and events, contact Claudia Dilbeck at cdilbeck@abouteldercare.org or call (918) 336-8500.



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Stay Safe During Oklahoma's Summer Heat

by Michael Colaw, Development Director

Summer brings longer days, family gatherings, and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. However, Oklahoma's summer temperatures can also create serious health risks, particularly for older adults. Taking a few simple precautions can help you stay safe, healthy, and comfortable during the hottest months of the year.

One of the most important steps is staying hydrated. As we age, our bodies become less effective at regulating temperature, and we may not feel thirsty even when we need fluids. Make it a habit to drink water throughout the day, especially when spending time outdoors. Foods with high water content, such as watermelon, cucumbers, and oranges, can also help support hydration.

When temperatures soar, try to limit outdoor activities to the cooler morning or evening hours. If you must be outside, wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing and a wide-brimmed hat, and take frequent breaks in shaded or air-conditioned spaces.

Keeping your home cool is equally important. Close blinds and curtains during the hottest part of the day to block sunlight and reduce indoor temperatures. Use fans when appropriate, and if you have air

conditioning, ensure it is working properly before extreme heat arrives.

Be familiar with the warning signs of heat-related illness. Symptoms such as dizziness, weakness, headache, nausea, rapid heartbeat, confusion, or excessive sweating can indicate heat exhaustion. If these symptoms occur, move to a cool location, drink water, and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or do not improve.

Summer is also a great time to check in on family members, friends, and neighbors. A simple phone call or visit can make a meaningful difference, particularly for those who live alone or have limited access to transportation or cooling resources.

At Elder Care, we understand that not everyone has a safe place to escape the heat. Through our Cool Room Project, we provide a comfortable, air-conditioned environment where older adults can find relief during periods of extreme temperatures. If you or someone you know needs assistance staying cool this summer, don't hesitate to contact Elder Care to learn more about available resources and support.

Stay safe, stay hydrated, and enjoy all that summer has to offer.

This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in June 2026

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