

# BREWSTER NEWS



May 2026  
Vol. 62 Issue 5



## CELEBRATING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

## CHAMPION YOUR HEALTH

**C**elebrated every May, **Older Americans Month (OAM)** is led by the **Administration for Community Living (ACL)**. Established in 1963, OAM is a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm commitments to serving older adults in our communities.

This year's theme, **"Champion Your Health,"** focuses on prevention, wellness, and personal responsibility as cornerstones of healthy aging. It encourages older adults to take an active role in their health — advocating for themselves, accessing preventive care, and making informed decisions that support independence.

The mission of Brewster Place is to **"provide all residents with opportunities for an optimal quality of life."** Our mission is the foundation of decision-making from the board and executive level to those programming the daily activity and wellness schedule for each

area of campus. Residents across the continuum of care have a say in what is planned for them, providing input and guidance to staff regarding their interests and ambitions. As a **"Champion of Health"** for residents, Brewster Place encourages involvement, independence and lifelong wellness and learning pursuits.

We invite you to attend a special program **"Celebrating Older Americans Month" with Connie Michaelis on Tuesday, May 19 at 2:00 pm in the Cultural Arts Center.** Connie is an enthusiastic and passionate advocate for the entire arena of successful aging. As a weekly newspaper columnist, Connie has become known as an expert in the field and speaks and writes to encourage and support her audience. Through storytelling and humor, Connie can move her audience towards embracing the necessary changes to live the last chapters of life to their fullest. You won't want to miss this one!

## OTHER CELEBRATIONS IN MAY

### NATIONAL NURSES WEEK | MAY 6-12

**Nurses Week** celebrates the effort, dedication, and sacrifice nurses make every day. Nurses are essential members of America's health-care workforce who provide care through every stage of life, working with patients at their most intimate and vulnerable moments. Nurses Week offers a chance to highlight and celebrate nurses for all they do.

### NATIONAL SKILLED NURSING CARE WEEK | MAY 10 - 16

**"Moments in Bloom"** is the theme of National Skilled Nursing Week and reflects how everyday acts of compassion, connection, and teamwork grow into meaningful experiences for residents, families, and staff. It celebrates the idea that big and small moments, when nurtured, can flourish to help residents live life to the fullest and with purpose.

***We thank all of our nurses and healthcare staff for the work they do each day.***

Staff at Brewster Health Center have planned two weeks of activities to celebrate! ■

### MISSION

Brewster Place is a retirement community providing all of its residents opportunities for an optimal quality of life.



# TO LOVE OURSELVES, JUST AS WE ARE

BY CHAPLAIN JULIE FREEMAN, M.DIV

**T**hich Nhat Hanh once wrote, *“To love is, first of all, to accept ourselves as we are.”* It’s a gentle reminder that love doesn’t begin with grand gestures or perfect moments—it begins with the quiet courage to embrace our own lives, exactly as they’ve unfolded.

In a community like ours, where every resident carries decades of memories, accomplishments, and hard earned wisdom, this message feels especially meaningful. Every wrinkle, every memory, every challenge overcome is part of a life fully lived. Embracing ourselves, our strengths, our quirks, our histories, opens the door to deeper peace and connection. Aging invites us to slow down, to reflect, and sometimes to confront parts of ourselves we once rushed past. But it also offers a beautiful opportunity: the chance to appreciate who we’ve become.

Self acceptance isn’t about ignoring our imperfections. It’s about recognizing that our experiences - joyful, painful, ordinary, extraordinary - have shaped us into people worth knowing and worth loving. When we offer ourselves that kindness, it becomes easier to extend it to others. And that’s something we see every day here: neighbors checking in on one another, sharing stories over morning coffee, offering smiles that brighten a hallway.

As we move through this season together, may we practice the simple but powerful act of accepting ourselves. Not who we were years ago, not who we think we “should” be—just who we are today. There’s real peace in that, and even more, there’s real love. ■

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## SPIRITUAL LIFE OPPORTUNITIES

### SUNDAY SUPPER CLUB

Sunday, May 3

4:00 pm | Evergreens Brewster Bean

Bring your dinner or snack and join us for fun, fellowship and curious conversations.

### MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Monday, May 11

No class on May 25 due to Memorial Day

2:00 pm | Main Street Chapel

Mindfulness Meditation offers a chance to slow down and center yourself in the present moment. Our 30-minute session begins with a short, guided meditation followed by silent meditation and guided closing. Everyone is welcome.

### CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, May 12 | 10:00 am

Main Street Chapel

Caregiver’s Support Group offers residents an opportunity to share their experiences and struggles with caring for their loved ones.

Caregiver’s Support Group is open to all caregiver’s seeking a safe place to discuss the challenges they face.

### PATHWAYS

Monday, May 18

2:00 pm | Main Street Chapel

Looking for extra support and a place to connect? Join Pathways -- a welcoming group where you can share life’s challenges and triumphs, build resilience, and find encouragement. Everyone is welcome.

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### MORNING DEVOTIONS

Sundays at 4:00 pm | 9:30 am | Evergreens Brewster Bean

Join us for coffee and a short devotion with Chaplain Julie.

## BREWSTER PLACE EDUCATIONAL SERIES

PRESENTED WITH LOCAL PARTNERS

### ADVANCED CARE PLANNING

Wednesday, May 20  
10:00 am | BHC Fink Living Room

Everyone is welcome to attend. If you have any questions, contact Chaplain Julie at 785-274-3349. Snacks provided.

### 4th TUESDAY BOOK CLUB

Join us each month for rich discussion facilitated by Sara Tucker. Books are available at each meeting and in Chaplain Julie's office. Contact Chaplain Julie at 785-274-3349 for information. Watch for new titles to be announced soon.

*O Pioneers!* by Willa Cather

Discussion Date | Tuesday, May 26

10:30 am | Main Street Chapel

Living in Nebraska, Swedish immigrant Alexandra Bergson struggles to make the family farm a success while trying to establish a personal life for herself.

### LEARNING FROM OUR RESIDENTS

#### *Wild and Worldly Adventures Part 2*

Presented by Thaine Hoffman

Thursday, May 7

1:00 pm | Cultural Arts Center

Thaine will bring his stories, photos, humor, and many adventures from his many worldwide travels. We can't wait to hear the piranha story this time!

#### *The History of Food*

Presented by Dr. Sara Tucker, Ph.D.

Tuesday, May 12 | 2:00 pm

Cultural Arts Center

Food has been essential to life since the beginning of time. As humanity has evolved, so has food—through advancements in cooking techniques, the discovery of food safety practices, and the expansion of ingredients made possible by trade. Cultures around the world have also shaped food by embracing unique smells, textures, and flavors. Come and learn about the fascinating history of food!

### A LITTLE MUSIC RIGHT HERE AT HOME

#### TOP CITY JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Monday, May 11

5:30 pm | Cultural Arts Center

Join us for an evening of live jazz with the Top City Jazz Ensemble! They are a local jazz band from Topeka West, featuring classic tunes and modern favorites. Their ensemble is made up of three saxophonists, three trumpets, two trombonists, drum set, bass, and guitar. We hope to see you all there!

#### TOPEKA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Tuesday, May 26

2:00 pm | Cultural Arts Center

The same Topeka Symphony Orchestra music that you know and love will be brought right here to our campus. As a sponsor of Topeka Symphony Orchestra, Brewster Place residents get to enjoy music without leaving campus. What a treat!

# CREATIVE ARTS

WITH KATHY PFLAUM, CREATIVE ARTS COORDINATOR

## BREWSTER EVENTS CENTER ART GALLERY

NEW THEMED ART SHOW JUNE AND JULY

### AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY

America is 250 years old and with that in mind, we are going to have a themed show in June and July entitled, "America's Birthday." We are looking to have a lot of red, white and blue on the gallery wall, but if you have a piece that showcases a beautiful part of the country and it's not red, white and blue, that's acceptable as well. Please submit the submission form below to Kathy Pflaum by 5:00 pm on Thursday, May 14. You can email your information to Kathy at [kathrynp@brewsterplace.org](mailto:kathrynp@brewsterplace.org) or drop your form off at her office at Evergreens.

### ART EXHIBIT ENTRY FORM

ARTIST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

SIZE OF PIECE \_\_\_\_\_

MEDIUM \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT:** All artwork must be ready to hang with a wire on the back of the artwork. If it is not ready to hang, we will not be able to use it in the exhibit

### BLOCK OF THE MONTH

#### ■ PIECED BLOCK OF THE MONTH

Wednesday, May 13

10:00 am | Redwood Art Studio

We will do a star themed Block of the Month for the piecing block this year.

#### ■ PAPER PIECED BLOCK OF THE MONTH

Wednesday, May 20

10:00 am | Evergreens Art Studio

We will learn to do paper piecing, a very precise method for block making.

#### ■ APPLIQUE BLOCK OF THE MONTH

Wednesday, May 27

10:00 am | Evergreens Art Studio

Roberta Foth and Carol Bragdon will lead you in making applique blocks. They are both outstanding in this technique and this is a class you do not want to miss.

### TABLE RUNNER WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 12

10:00 am | Evergreens Art Studio

We will work on making table runners to sell at the Bazaar. Thread, fabric and fun provided!

### CARD MAKING

Tuesday, May 19

1:00 pm | Evergreens Art Studio

We are going to use melted crayons to create backgrounds. Come enjoy the fun!

### CYANOTYPE

Thursday, May 21

10:00 am | Redwood Art Studio

Remember the magic last year of using the sun to create beautiful design? We are doing it again this year with some variations. Card stock will be prepared to make your cards as well as having fabric, fabric bags and other items to use as we make these for the Bazaar.

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## **OPERATION WARMTH SERVICE PROJECTS 2026**

We have two service projects in 2026 to give back to our community. The projects will run simultaneously. We will make crocheted and knitted scarves, hats and mittens. The other project will be making quilts and afghans for a local charity. The Service Committee will decide the charity as we get closer to October.

When you have finished an item for the **Operation Warmth**, please leave on the table in either The Evergreens or Redwood Art Studios marked as: **Attention: Kathy, Operation Warmth**. Items will be picked up and stored until time for the donation. Quilts will be donated right before the charity prepares for the holiday season. More detailed information about donation events for Operation Warmth will come closer to the event.

Kathy will demonstrate Stitch in the Ditch machine quilting. These quilts are great for practicing your machine quilting talents.

### **OPERATION WARMTH WORK SESSION**

**Tuesday, May 12  
1:00 pm | Redwood Art Studio**

#### **Total count so far:**

- Hats and Scarves - 10
- Quilts and Afghans - 14
- Gloves - 1

## **TEA TOWEL TUESDAY**

**Tuesday, May 26**

**10:00 am | Redwood Art Studio**

We have more stitches to learn and old ones to review. We will have tea towels ready to embroidery for next year's Bazaar.

## **STRING BASKETS**

**Tuesday, May 26**

**1:00 pm | Redwood Art Studio**

We will make string baskets for the Bazaar. These take strings, threads and yarns and turn them into what-not baskets or small baskets to put electric tea lights in.

## **CREATIVE ART BRAIN EXERCISES**

**Thursday, May 28**

**10:00 am | Evergreens Art Studio**

We will continue to practice creative arts by doing exercises that are designed to assist in being creative. We will have basic exercises to do using colored pencils, regular pencils and other materials stocked in the studio and available for you to use any time. We will do these exercises to assist you in design, getting unstuck in the creative process and in general, just having fun. Join Kathy in creative exploration.

## **OPEN STUDIO**

These times are for us to gather, chat, get assistance for projects and have fun. Come join us for fun, conversation and art making.

## **KNITTING AND CROCHET**

Check the activities calendar for date and time for this group. We will learn new stitches from each other, chat and have fun. ■

## **GIVE PICKLEBALL A TRY!**

**P**ickleball is a racket sport in which two or four players use a smooth-faced paddle to hit a perforated, hollow plastic ball over a net. Brewster Place has two indoor Pickleball courts at the Cultural Arts Center with games played every Saturday morning from 7:00 am - 1:00 pm (unless otherwise noted). More players are needed as the game requires at least 2-4 players. If you aren't quite sure about giving it a try, just come watch and talk to current players. It's the fastest growing sport for those 50+. ■

## RESIDENT COUNCIL UPDATE

### LIBRARY COMMITTEE

**W**e are working to add to our library and need residents' assistance. Brewster Place has two libraries on campus with one at Redwood on the lower level in the Klinge Activity Center and one at Evergreens, adjacent to the Information Center by the north entrance. The Library Committee would like to stretch their dollars to make sure there are books on the shelf that you will enjoy reading.

Please let one of the committee members know if there is a particular book we can add to our list of potential reads to the library. Please give us the title, author and category. We will combine the list and then decide the titles to buy and add to the library. We will check with the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library as well to see if the title will be picked up by them. If they have or will have the title, we may elect to purchase titles they do not have or only buy one book rather than two of the same title.

We are also working to better understand our donations of books. If you have donations to make, we ask that for the time being you contact Creative Arts Coordinator Kathy Pflaum to discuss the donation.

Thank you for assisting us in making our libraries delightful. ■

#### Library Committee Members

**Barbara Buntin**

785-266-4200

**Jeanene Johnson**

785-224-7102

neener2@icloud.com

**Jackie Buchanan**

785-231-4621

dleeeugene@outlook.com

**Helen Petterson**

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**Sharon Efirid**

785-554-5784

sb4efird@gmail.com

**Marjorie Van Buren**

785-274-5587

mjvanburen@gmail.com

**Staff Liaison**

**Kathy Pflaum**

785-274-3317

kathrynp@brewsterplace.org

## VEHICLE INFORMATION

**T**o keep resident records up to date, we ask that if you get a new vehicle or have given up your vehicle, to please notify **Maintenance Manager Josh Saunders by calling him at 785-274-3309**. Josh updates parking spot assignments on campus and there have been instances where new vehicles are not recorded in the database. In addition, there might be instances where a vehicle needs to be moved and by having accurate information available, it helps staff notify the owner in a more timely fashion. Information Brewster Place keeps on file includes **make, model, and license plate number**.

Thank you for your help in this matter. ■



### TUNE TO BPTV 1960 FOR...

- Morning Announcements
- Daily Schedule
- Weekly Movies
- Exercise Classes
- Cancellations
- Photographs
- 24/7 Music



## KU OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

### **The Development & Evolution of the United States Army: The Cold War Years 1947-1995**

(This class continues the course taught in 2025)

**Instructor: Bob Smith**

**Thursdays, May 14, 21 and 28**

**1:00—3:00 pm | Cultural Arts Center**

This class picks up where “The Growth and Evolution of the United States Army, 1775 – 1945” left off. Over three weeks we’ll examine the changes of the U.S. Army during the Cold War years that focused on a doctrine of containing and limiting Community expansion. In the first class, we’ll look at the Korean War and the planned deterrence of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact forces in Eastern Europe. Next, we’ll focus on the Army’s plans for continental defense in the nuclear/missile age and the restructuring of the Army’s tactical organization from the 1950s Pentomic Division to the ROAD Division of the early 1960s. Lastly, we’ll delve into the Army’s operations during the Vietnam Conflict, its rebuilding and reequipping in the 1970s and its land, sea and air doctrine of the Desert Storm era. ■

**Non Brewster Place residents must register online or by phone:**

Online [Osher.ku.edu](http://Osher.ku.edu)  
Phone 785-864-6779

**Brewster Place residents and BrewsterConnect members attend for free.**

Please call 785-274-3398 to register, but you are welcome to come without registration.

## CINCO DE MAYO LUNCH AND CELEBRATION

**Tuesday, May 5 | 11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

**Cultural Arts Center**

**\$10.00 per person**

**R**esidents and BrewsterConnect members are invited to this special lunch where the menu will include pork tamales, beef enchiladas, queso and chips, Spanish rice, salsa, a Mexican cookie, lemonade and water. All this for just \$10 per plate! The charge will be added to your statement. Special thank you to Director of Dining Services Manuel Martinez for making such a wonderful, authentic, meal. In addition, a special thank you to the Diversity and Inclusion Group who plan to help serve the meal. No RSVPs needed – we will see you there! ■

## RED, WHITE AND BREWSTER CHOIR REHEARSALS BEGIN

**Thursdays, May 28; June 4, 11, 18, 25**

**3:30 pm | Main Street Chapel**

If you love to sing, you are invited to join the Brewster Place Choir in preparation for the annual Independence Day celebration - Red, White and Brewster on July 2.

Dorothy Iliff, daughter of resident Mary Muilenburg, will again direct the choir with members of the Cornerstone School choir joining as well. It's a tradition, so please take part! ■



## NEW ART INSTALLATION | "Capturing Grace"

We have amazing artists at Brewster Place and on April 20, we celebrated the opening of a new art installation in the Redwood lobby. Resident Don Mahrle's wood carved artwork "Capturing Grace" can now be enjoyed by everyone.

**Don described them as follows:** The **Frigatebird** cannot walk and lives on cliffs, thus enabling it to jump off the cliff and fly. With a small body and a seven foot wingspan, the bird spends much of the day in flight using the wind currents. They tend to harass other birds to rob them of the food they have captured (in this case the Tropic Red Billed bird). Frigatebirds are referred to as kleptoparasites because of their robbery skills. Don's Frigatebird is carved out of Tupelo wood.

The **Red-billed Tropicbird** has a wing span of three feet, and features white plumage

with black markings, a black mask and a beautiful red bill. It also lives in the cliffs. The Red-billed Tropicbird is an excellent fisher and an excellent mark for the Frigate. Both birds are part of the Pelican family. The Red-billed Tropicbird is carved out of Northern White Cedar.

Don has been carving for over 40 years and is classically trained in wood carving. "Capturing Grace"

is a result of the last class he took before the Covid shutdown. Don estimates it took over 340 hours to carve and paint the birds.

The cabinet was designed and built especially for the artwork by resident Don Schaefer. The cabinet is made from Sapele wood that comes from Africa. The lumber was donated to us. The glass in the cabinet is tempered glass which allows it to be safe. ■



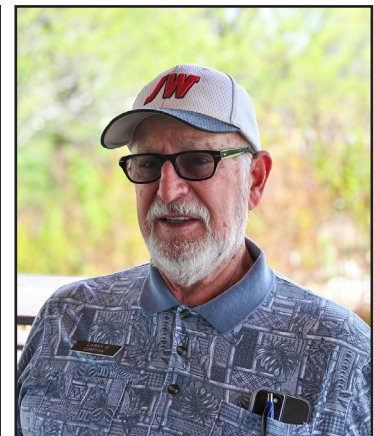
## THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO ENRICH YOUR LIFE



**Don Mahrle** spoke at the installation ceremony for his wood carved birds, "Capturing Grace." The display can be seen at Redwood near the grand piano. Thank you, Don, for allowing Brewster Place residents, staff and friends the opportunity to enjoy your creation.



**Cynthia Montague and Linda Douglass** joined a group on a trip to Lake Shawnee to tour Ensley Gardens. The weather this spring wasn't great for tulips, but everyone had a nice afternoon outside with sweet treats to top off the day.



**Larry Griffin** found the shade at Ensley Gardens after he toured the gardens. There were just a few tulips that survived the early warm temperatures followed by freezing temperatures. Ah Kansas! Four seasons in one day at times.

## **OFF CAMPUS | A FEW HIGHLIGHTS**

### **MUSICAL REFLECTIONS WITH LAWRENCE CIVIC CHOIR AND WILLIAM BAKER FESTIVAL SINGERS AT TOPEKA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**Saturday, May 2 | 2:00 pm | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

The award-winning **William Baker Festival Singers** culminate their 28th concert season. The **Lawrence Civic Choir** joins them for the celebration. The concert will feature classical works, modern works, signature spirituals and gospels. Concert is from 3:00 - 4:00 pm with a wine and cookie reception following. No tickets are required, but a free will donation will be accepted. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **TOPEKA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**Saturday, May 2 | 6:45 pm | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

Tune in for an epic night dedicated entirely to the music of John Williams, one of Hollywood's greatest composers, whose music instantly evokes adventure, nostalgia, and movie magic! From the triumphant brass of **Star Wars** to the haunting strings of **Schindler's List**, John Williams's symphonic film scores have shaped the sound of modern cinema. This electrifying concert highlights the genius behind the music that has defined decades of movies and transforms the orchestra into the ultimate blockbuster experience. Many have season tickets, but pricing for single show tickets are as follows: Tickets for Section 1, 2 and 3 Senior (65 & older) – \$39/\$37/\$25. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **LUNCH AT HANOVER PANCAKE HOUSE AND TOUR GRACE EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL**

**Wednesday, May 6 | 10:30 am | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

First we'll enjoy lunch at Hanover Pancake House. Their extensive menu offers a wide selection of dishes including traditional combination plates, omelets, sandwiches, salads and a daily lunch special that is appealing to all tastes. Lunch is Dutch treat. Next we will get a one-hour tour of Grace Episcopal Cathedral that will include hearing the history of the fire and rebuilding of the church, the stained-glass windows, viewing the liturgical and the stations of the cross, and hearing the organ. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **CELLOS AT THE OPERA!**

**Thursday, May 7 | 6:30 pm | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

Topeka Cello Collective and Washburn University Cellos perform opera favorites with special guests from the Washburn University Music Department faculty. Please call Jen at 78-274-3398 for reservations.

### **FESTIVAL SINGERS - Better Together**

**Monday, May 11 | 6:30 pm | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

Festival Singers present their beloved stage and screen concert with music that celebrates connection, collaboration, and community. Through unforgettable songs from musicals and movies, we'll explore how we're stronger—and brighter—when we journey together. Come sing, smile, and celebrate what it means to belong. Tickets can be purchased online for ages 65+ at \$25 each. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **LUNCH OUT AT JONG'S**

**Wednesday, May 13 | 10:45 am | Bus pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

A local favorite! Fresh, made from scratch, Thai food. Lunch will be Dutch treat. \$25 per person - Family style meal that includes appetizers, three entrees, and soup. Hurry and call to make your reservation – only 20 people get to go on this one and it'll fill up fast! Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **VISIT BOTANICA, THE WICHITA GARDENS**

**Wednesday, May 20 | 8:30 am | Shuttle pick up at Brewster Events Center and Redwood**

First, lunch at Sam and Nancy's Café, where they serve homemade comfort food in a full buffet including a salad bar along with soups and chicken pot pie. Don't forget dessert! Then golf cart and walking tours at the Botanica Wichita Gardens. Last, stop at Nifty Nut House. Tickets to the Botanica Gardens are \$25 each. Lunch is Dutch treat and \$13 transportation fee. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.

### **DINNER AT Q39 IN LAWRENCE**

**Wednesday, May 27 | 4:00 pm | Shuttle pick up at Evergreens and Redwood**

Q39 is a new restaurant that invites you to enjoy a chef-driven, pit to plate BBQ and a full service bar. We have reserved outdoor seating. It will be beautiful! Dinner is Dutch treat, transportation fee is \$13. Please call Jen at 785-274-3398 as space is limited.