

## Area Bloggers



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# One Two Three Four By Ruth Dockins

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OCTOBER 29TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

One Two Three Four By Ruth Dockins

*Submitted Article to  
news@showmetimes.com  
Age Spots – By Ruth Dockins*

### ***One – Two – Three – Four***

As I started this article it just seemed to keep growing, thus the name of the article had to keep changing. Finally I just got frustrated with myself and decided to give it a simple name.

#### **#1:**

Medicare Prescription Drugs (MED D) open enrollment started Oct. 15 and will run through Dec. 7. This is the time for those of you who have a MED D plan to check to see if there is a better one out there for you. Every year most of the plans change their premium cost, deductible and/or the drugs they cover. Some Medicare Advantage plans change the counties in which they choose to offer plans. We have heard from several people who tell us their Advantage plan is leaving their area and they need to find a different plan.

Each person who has a MED D plan should have received a notice from their plan in late September stating what the new premium will be as well as the deductible and list of drugs covered. If you don't remember receiving this notice please check with your plan to learn if there will be any changes. My husband has had a plan ever since the plans began and has had to change plans every year. The least expensive MED D monthly plan premium for 2014 is \$12.60 and the most expensive is \$137.90, so as you can see there is a wide variety of plans from which to choose.

## **#2:**

Something that will not change for 2014 however is the Medicare Part B monthly premium,

It will be \$104.90 in 2014, the same as it was in 2013. The premium has either been less than projected or remained the same, for the past three years. The Medicare Part B deductible will also remain unchanged at \$147.

"We continue to work hard to keep Medicare beneficiaries' costs low by rewarding providers for producing better value for their patients and fighting fraud and abuse. As a result, the Medicare Part B premium will not increase for 2014, which is good news for Medicare beneficiaries and for American taxpayers," said CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner.

## **#3:**

We, at Aging Matters, (formerly known as SEMO Area Agency on Aging) are always looking for people interested in helping others by becoming SMP volunteers. These are the people who help fight Medicare fraud and abuse simply by providing information to Medicare beneficiaries. This is a very rewarding volunteer job because SMP volunteers have played a big part in the recovery of millions of dollars that were returned to the Medicare system. Makes you wonder if part of that money returned is why the Medicare Part B premium and the deductible have not gone up for next year. The SMP volunteers are helping the entire country!

## **#4:**

People with Medicare do not have to sign up for the new Health Insurance Marketplace. The Health Insurance Marketplace is for people who are uninsured

or under-insured, so if you are on Medicare just relax and don't worry about all the problems that you are hearing about on TV it doesn't affect you!

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## Medicare Open Enrollment

OCTOBER 25TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Medicare Open Enrollment

*Submitted by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

### **Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report**

**8th Congressional District, Missouri** - Soon senior citizens across our congressional district will be receiving information about Medicare Open

Enrollment. During this two month enrollment period, current Medicare beneficiaries can alter their coverage plans and new beneficiaries can sign up for a Medicare plan for the first time. Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15th and closes December 7th. During Open Enrollment, beneficiaries will have the opportunity to:

- Change to a Medicare Advantage Plan or select a different plan that better meets your needs;
- Join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan;
- Change your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

Open Enrollment is an important time for seniors to make sure they have the Medicare plan that best suits their individual needs. Navigating any federal program can be daunting, and my staff and I are here to assist with this process. By visiting [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or calling 1-800-MEDICARE, you learn about the various plans Medicare offers. Should you encounter difficulties in this process, I encourage you to contact one of my district offices.

You may call my Cape Girardeau office at 573-335-0101, Farmington at 573-756-9755, Rolla at 573-364-2455, or West Plains at 417-255-1515.

Our Eighth Congressional District is home to many senior citizens who rely on Medicare for medical and prescription needs. I understand the importance of Medicare in seniors' daily lives, as both of my parents are Medicare recipients. Since my election to Congress, I have worked to keep the promise of Medicare to our seniors. Moving forward, I will continue efforts to improve seniors' access to Medicare and fight any actions to deny care or change benefits for our Greatest Generation. Seniors who have worked hard their entire lives and paid into Medicare and Social Security deserve the best options possible. Please know that my staff and I are here to help you and we hope you will contact us if we may be of assistance.

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## DHS and DMS Marching Bands Compete for Top Awards

OCTOBER 15TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

DHS and DMS Marching Bands Compete for Top Awards

*Written by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

**Charleston, Missouri** - Congratulations to the DHS and DMS Marching Bearcats for their victories this weekend at the Southeast Missouri Band Directors Association Marching Competition.

It's been an annual tradition for the Charleston R-1 School District to host the Marching Contest. Since the 1980's when the marching Bluejays needed new uniforms and decided to host a fundraising event they have invited area bands to compete on the street and on the field to raise money for the band.

In the parade competition they received: Outstanding Music, Outstanding Field Command, Outstanding Marching, and Outstanding Flags. 1<sup>st</sup> Place in their Division and Highest score of 20 high school bands in competition.

On the field, they received 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> division beating Park Hills and New Madrid County Central, and received the 4<sup>th</sup> highest score of the 14 bands in competition on the field! "We were even victorious over a band we've never beaten before," commented Scott Rybolt, DHS Band Director.

Bands performing included North County, Sikeston, Ste. Genevieve, Perryville, Jackson, Northwest, Puxico, East Prairie, Woodland, and Charleston.

Congratulations to the Dexter High School Band on their awards and performances Saturday. Mr. Jim Wade and his middle school students also competed well.

T.S. Hill Middle School finished in 1st Place in the parade portion of the marching contest. They scored a 72.25 beating Advance, South Pemiscot, Charleston, Caruthersville, and Richland. Of the 9 years under Mr. Wade's direction, the middle school has taken first place 8 times. Quite the record!

T.S. Hill Marching Bearcats also earned Outstanding Music, Outstanding Marching, Outstanding Percussion, and Outstanding Flags in the parade contest.

Not only did they receive 1<sup>st</sup> Place in their Division BUT they had the 4th highest score overall for the day. This included all the middle school and high school bands who performed, 26 total band for the day. Only three bands scored higher, one of which was the Dexter High School Band. Way to go Middle School!!

The Dexter community is extremely proud of each band student and for all that you do on and off the field. We appreciate your talents as well as your entertainment during pre-game and half-time shows.

Band directors Jim Wade and Scott Rybolt are very proud of their students regarding their effort and achievements at Charleston, and are also very thankful to the parents and community for their help and support.

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## UMC to Help Veterans With Disability Benefits

OCTOBER 01ST 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

UMC to Help Veterans With Disability Benefits

*Submitted by*

*Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

**Columbia, Missouri** - The University of Missouri School of Law is opening a new clinic that will help veterans and give law students real world experience. The new Veterans Clinic at the MU School of Law will help veterans and their families secure disability benefits.

MU law students will be supervised by experienced attorneys throughout the process and will have the opportunity to work in a law firm atmosphere within the law school serving real client needs. Law students interested in personal injury, civil litigation or administrative law will benefit from the skills taught at the clinic.

The clinic will include a weekly lecture for students on substantive law relating to veterans' benefits, followed by work with actual veteran files.

In addition, students will:

Interview clients, witnesses and medical personnel.

Research and develop the law and facts of the case, draft pleadings, and prepare briefs.

Interact with other practitioners in the area of federal veterans law, thereby encouraging networking developments.

Be encouraged to become members of the National Organization of Veterans Advocates (NOVA) and to attend one of the NOVA conferences, which are held twice annually.

Speakers at the opening ceremony include Gary Myers, dean of the MU School of Law , David Myers, Deputy Director for Case Evaluation Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program

The opening ceremony will be at 1 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>, Courtroom, Hulston Hall on the campus of the University of Missouri.

LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 01ST 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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# We Are The Field

SEPTEMBER 25TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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We Are The Field

*Written and Submitted by*

*Neal E. Boyd of Sikeston, Missouri*

## ***We Are the Field***

One thing I love to do is simply drive through Southeast Missouri during harvest time. I liken it to those on the East Coast, where I once lived, who love to watch the leaves change during the fall. Just seeing the corn and wheat, beans and rice ripe and ready to be picked is a sight to see. Unfortunately, there are those who fly over us and live in the concrete jungles of America who will never get to experience or see what we have the opportunity of seeing up close each and every year. They don't know what it's like to be reliant on nature...to the rain...or lack of it. God tests us year after year, but when his bounty is plentiful, it is beautiful.

President Reagan once said, "If things are going to get better (in this economy) then things have to get better for the American Farmer." I believe this is true even now, especially for those of us in Southeast Missouri. Reagan understood that farmers are the backbone of a rural economy, and that in their weathered hands rests the livelihoods of the community as a whole.

I know that a farm family is a proud family with generations of history and tradition, and I know that a farm family lives it every day, with more knowledge and respect for land and livestock than many of us will never know.

And even though I can't start to understand the agony of a failed crop, or what that means to the families beholden to the land for their prosperity and sustenance, I do know the entrepreneurial spirit it takes to be a success in business. I know what it means to be an independent self-starter, and staying

motivated to work towards a goal with only the "hope" of a positive outcome, but remain alert to the task even as the sand shifts, and the outcome changes.

I know what it's like to not have an audience or clients, and what that kind of "drought" means for business. I have had the weather determine my schedule. I, too, have suffered in the heat for my craft. I have tasted both success and defeat year after arduous year, yet remained resilient through all of God's daily challenges.

I admit there is a lot I need to learn about farming, because watching the crops grow is simply a beginner's course in the subject. As for policy, I look forward to listening to new ideas, but also standing firm and remaining true to what has made our farmer's thrive while seeking ways to improve their lives and their industry. I see the many similarities of economics that also exist in my field of expertise, and I look forward to learning...to build a common ground in order to find the best ways to promote policies and ideas that will allow us all to flourish and succeed in the future.

I write songs, one in particular is called "Missouri Anthem." In it I wrote the words, "Our families and fields bare the fruits of our labor," and they truly do. We are all a product of someone's hard work and sacrifice for a life we cannot even actualize or imagine yet. For now, our life is a magnificent gift and blessing with so many possibilities. We are the field...waiting for the farmer to plant whatever seeds he deems necessary to cultivate the land. And to that farmer...I salute you.

Neal E. Boyd

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