

## Area Bloggers



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# National Mutt Day

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DECEMBER 02ND 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

National Mutt Day

*Submitted by*

*Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

**USA** - Do you have a special dog in your life? Our canine friends deserve a day of their own!

Each year on December 2nd, National Mutt Day is celebrated across the United States. This day was created as a day to embrace, save and celebrate mixed breed dogs.

"National Mutt Day was created in 2005 by Celebrity Pet Expert and Animal Welfare Advocate, Colleen Paige, and is celebrated on both July 31st and December 2nd. National Mutt Day is all about embracing; saving and celebrating mixed breed dogs. The biggest percentage of dogs euthanized in due to the constant over-breeding and public desire of designer dogs and pure bred puppies that are sold to pet stores supplied by puppy mills that often produce ill and horribly neglected animals."

National Mutt Day was created and is celebrated on two dates per year to raise awareness of the plight of mixed breed dogs in shelters around the nation and to educate the public about the sea of mixed breed dogs that desperately await new

homes. Mixed breed dogs tend to be healthier, better behaved, they live longer and are just as able to perform the duties of pure bred dogs - such as bomb and drug sniffing, search and rescue and guiding the blind. There are millions of loving and healthy mixed breed dogs sitting in shelters, who are desperately searching for a new home. One of the county's most famous movie dogs is Benji, is a mixed breed Terrier.

So please visit your local shelter and find a new friend today! If you can't adopt a mixed breed friend on July 31st and December 2nd, please donate at least \$5 to your local animal shelter, as they all need financial assistance and every dollar counts!

You can also volunteer to walk a dog, donate food and other supplies needed to your local animal shelter or make a donation in the memory of a loved dog who has crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

For more information regarding National Mutt Day, click **HERE**.

If you would like to spoil your favorite mutt, check out **Mississippi Mutts** located on Broadway in Cape Girardeau. They have wonderful all natural dog biscuits, muffins and cakes made just for your pet! Plus you can pamper your pet with a K-9 bath and body shampoo, get a new outfit or collar! Click **HERE** for their Facebook page!

***Shown in the photo are Andrew and Anna Ellinghouse enjoying their adopted canine companion Ellie who just recently celebrated her "Gotcha Day".***

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## It's All About Medicare! by Ruth Dockins

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NOVEMBER 22ND 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

It's All About Medicare! by Ruth Dockins

*Submitted Article to*

*news@showmetimes.com*

*Age Spots – By Ruth Dockins*

### It's All About Medicare!

The first thing I want you to know is: people with Medicare do not need to sign up for the new Health Insurance Marketplace, as they are already covered by Medicare and have comprehensive health care coverage. The Marketplace won't affect Medicare choices, and no matter how an individual gets Medicare, whether through Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan, they still have the same benefits and security they have now.

Now, for other news about Medicare: the premium for Medicare Part B for 2014 will be same as it is for 2013, \$104.90 for most people. However, approximately 5% of the current Medicare population will pay higher Medicare Part B premiums, based on their income. If the income shown on your 2012 tax return is greater than \$85,000 for an individual return or \$170,000 for a joint return you will be charged a higher premium. You will receive a special notification about it, along

with information about how to pay and how to appeal if you think you shouldn't have to pay the higher premium.

If you are in this group, and if you also have a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (including Medicare Advantage plans which incorporate prescription drug coverage), you will also have to pay a surcharge based on income. This will also be sent to you separately.

The deductible for Medicare Part B for 2014 will also remain unchanged at \$147.00. The inpatient deductible, for those enrolled in Part A of conventional Medicare and are hospitalized increases from \$1184 to \$1216 for a hospital stay.

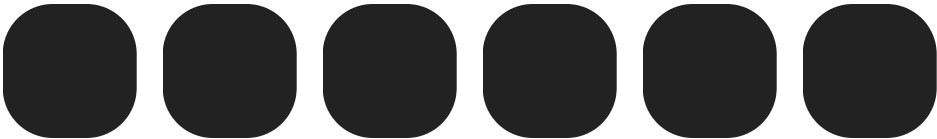
For beneficiaries in skilled nursing facilities, the daily co-insurance for days 21 through 100 will be \$152, an increase of \$4 from 2013. Beneficiaries do not pay anything for the first 20 days of skilled nursing facility care. However, to qualify for Medicare coverage, your doctor must certify that you need daily skilled care, like intravenous injections or physical therapy, and your stay follows at least a 3-day, medically necessary, inpatient hospital stay for a related illness or injury.

People with low incomes can participate in programs that reduce or even eliminate Part B premiums, deductibles, and/or co-payments. The income limit is currently \$1,137 per month for a single person and \$1,533 for a married couple. It is revised annually, typically in January. Other restrictions apply. For information about this, contact us at Aging Matters, 1-800-392-8771.

LAST UPDATED ON NOVEMBER 22ND 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uq6c/Its-All-About-Medicare-by-Ruth-Dockins>

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## Boyd's Blog - How I Got Fat

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NOVEMBER 05TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Boyd's Blog - How I Got Fat

Written by  
Neal E. Boyd  
Sikeston, Missouri

### How I Got Fat

I would like to think that I have a big heart because I have a charitable spirit. I would like to believe that I am three times the size of a normal person just because that is the way God made me. But the hard truth is I eat too much, and stress too much about a variety of things.

I've comforted myself with food after a long, hard day, and I have hung out with my friends and sometimes socialized to excess. I am a typical American man with a love for life...but in my case a short life if I'm not really careful.

I hear that the first step to recovery is to admit you have a problem. Well, I have to admit I have a problem with Food! Why do I eat so much? Let's go through a list of some of my excuses;

- My father left before I was born...
- A girl turned me down for the dance...
- Death of family or friends...

- Insecurity...
- My mother's cancer...
- "Dawson Creek's" ended and "How I Met Your Mother" is ending...
- The Cardinals lost the World Series...
- Just because it's delicious...

I love the show "Madmen," and back in the mid-part of the last century it was cool to smoke, drink, and eat a lot. Television is so inspiring!

However, by the latter part of the century our icons were mostly gone due to a variety of incidents or ailments due to their vices. I once thought I could look, act, and be anybody from that generation. I did all that dreaming with a piece of pizza, a cheeseburger, or chips in my hands for years...and now on the cusp of my 38th birthday...I regret it all!

My weight has been the single greatest struggle of my life. And I realize I'm not alone in this fight, but I also know that I am in a war I have to win. After all, children are watching and waiting to see what I do. If they think I believe that being big and fat is healthy, and they want to be like me, they might just follow in my footsteps to an early grave! I won't have that on my conscience.

So, How do I Win? My girlfriend told me, "Don't let your weight kill you." That's the ultimate goal. I could lose the weight for other people...for my friends...or for my mother. But this battle is personal and nobody but can fight it except me!

I did not get this far in life feeling sorry for myself or even paying attention to how out of control I was. I am the one who gets to split my pants in public or break flimsy, folding chairs. I get to hear the ridicule about my size based on certain Facebook pics. I get to wake up to the scale and the mirror. I get to choose if today I move forward or step backwards.

Well, today I declare WAR on my weight, and I am prepared to fight it with everything I have! And luckily I have some new weapons in my arsenal...an army of friends who love me, a devoted family, and the girl who finally said yes.

My mother said "Nothing worth having ever comes easy." Lord, please be with me...again...

Neal E. Boyd

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## Boyd's Blog - Soft Bigotry

NOVEMBER 03RD 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Boyd's Blog - Soft Bigotry

Written by  
Neal E. Boyd  
Sikeston, Missouri

I was told about a week ago that,  
"You've come a long way for a colored boy!"

It was hard to take offense because it was actually a genuine compliment from an eighty something year old Caucasian man who obviously meant no harm.

Still it got me thinking of the generational divide we deal with in our everyday lives. It made me think of the expectations we set for ourselves and others, and

President George W. Bush's line about, "The soft bigotry of lowered expectations."

In my opinion, Bush's line had nothing to do with Race, but it was more of a statement on class and our perceptions of each other based on socio-economic factors, and pure old-fashioned motivation and apathy regardless of the color of your skin or the content of character.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Petri dish known as the world of higher education. I always thought of college as a great battle where rich and poor competed for the Middleclass...where only the motivated survived, but the truth is we do not know who is motivated by what or who will go on to achieve great things!

I was not given a choice in my house when it came to education. I was told that I would go to college and get a degree. Mom always knew best! But there were friends around me who were told they could never go to college due to financial circumstances, or those friends who were pushed by some educators toward vocational trades and told they could never make it at a four year college.

Sometimes people of all nationalities and creeds are motivated by the desire just to simply make a better life for themselves and their families...to simply live for the more and more seemingly unattainable American Dream. But who are we to judge who has the right "credentials" or "will" to succeed.

We the People limit ourselves so readily and willingly for a variety of reasons...the main reason being the Fear of Failure. Well, we are all destined to fail when we listen to those voices of doubt...or of ridicule...or of just plain soft bigotry. We are destined to fail when we heed those voices that tell us that failure is eminent, and that our dreams are foolish.

Truth is, I HAVE come a long way for a colored boy...and I am proud of it!

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## One Two Three Four By Ruth Dockins

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!

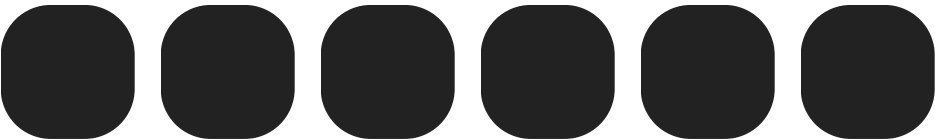
## **#4:**

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!

LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 29TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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