SENCA is now licensed with the State of Nebraska as a radon measurement and mitigation agency. Josh Nincehelser, Energy Auditor/QCI and Radon Mitigation Specialist, has received his license thru the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and can provide mitigation assistance to both low-income homeowners and renters on a sliding scale as well as those who can pay the full cost of mitigation.

Radon is a naturally occurring cancer causing, radioactive gas you can’t see, smell or taste. It is produced when uranium breaks down in soil, rock, and water. It’s then released into the air. Radon is odorless, tasteless, and invisible. Radon can accumulate in some places where ventilation is inadequate, such as in an underground mine. It can also build up inside buildings. Long term exposure to high levels of radon can be dangerous to your health.

About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked.

Radon can enter your house by air pressures inside your home that is usually lower than the pressure in the soil around your home’s foundation. Because of this difference in pressure, your house acts like a vacuum, drawing radon in through foundation cracks and other openings. Your home then traps the radon inside, where it can build up. Cass, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson Counties have extremely high radon amounts. One out of every two radon tests conducted in the State of Nebraska is elevated. Homes with an annual average radon level at or above 4 picocuries per liter should be mitigated to reduce radon levels.

The addition of a Radon Mitigation program will enhance SENCA’s Housing Department and will be a great asset to the agency as well as the seven (7) county service area of southeast Nebraska. Call us today at 402-862-2411, extension 104, for more information or to schedule a radon inspection.

Submitted by: Gin Christiansen, Housing Director

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Richardson County Transit Receives New Van

Richardson County Transit has a new vehicle! The 2018 Dodge Caravan was picked up from the Department of Transportation in Lincoln on Friday, October 12th. The new van was put into service the same day providing rides to local patrons.

Several fundraisers were held throughout the past year and generously supported. The funds raised helped pay sales tax and licensing fees for the new van.

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SENCA Southeast Nebraska Community Action Partnership

Investing in our neighbors through education and partnerships to improve lives and build strong communities in southeast Nebraska.

Autumn 2018

Join the Movement to Help End Hunger and Homelessness

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, November 10th - 18th, is an annual program where people come together across the country to draw attention to the problems of hunger and homelessness.

No one should have to worry about whether they will have food on their plate or a roof over their head. But the reality is that hunger and homelessness are widespread problems that affect far too many people.

Many Americans are living on the edge, forced to choose between basic necessities like purchasing food, paying rent, or going to the doctor. While poverty is often associated with joblessness, a significant amount of the poor facing these issues are actually employed.

The working poor are working people whose incomes fall below a given poverty line and are often the most vulnerable. These individuals struggle to meet their basic needs, living paycheck to paycheck and in constant stress. It is typically an unplanned emergency situation that brings these households to SENCA for assistance.

While SENCA provides a variety of programs and services, along with a team of trained and dedicated employees, we cannot fight this battle alone. In each of our communities, and as a society, we have the resources and knowledge to end hunger and homelessness — we just need the collective will to make ideas a reality.

SENCA invites you to help make a difference this November - *Volunteer your talents, *Donate your tax deductible donation at www.senca.org and *Educate others on the needs in your community.

Together we can help end hunger and homelessness!

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Thank you for your continued support of SENCA’s programs and services. Tax Deductible Donations can be made online at www.senca.org

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Weatherization Day 2018

Fourth Graders from Pawnee City Schools learned important facts about SENCA’s Weatherization program from their teacher, Miss Jordan Schaardt.

The students participated in a coloring contest to help promote National Weatherization Day on October 30th.

Richardson County Transit Receives New Van

Richardson County Transit has a new vehicle! The new 2018 Dodge Caravan was picked up from the Department of Transportation in Lincoln on Friday, October 12th. The new van was put into service the same day providing rides to local patrons.

The Richardson County Commissioners provided the matching funds that allowed SENCA to purchase the new van. Several fundraisers were held throughout the past year and generously supported. The funds raised helped pay sales tax and licensing fees for the new van.

For more information or to schedule a ride, please contact Brenda Guilliams at 402-245-3664.
SENCA Recognizes National Weatherization Day

In a nationwide effort to create more awareness of local Weatherization programs and the energy saving benefits provided to qualifying households, October 30th is recognized as National Weatherization Day! SENCA provides a Weatherization program to qualifying residents throughout the seven (7) county service area of Cass, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, and Sarpy. Weatherization enables low-income families, whether they own their own home or rent, to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. After receiving Weatherization services the average home experiences an average of 18.7% decrease in heating costs. Additional savings are achieved in cooling costs. This conservation of energy reduces Nebraska’s dependence on imported energy and is a major contribution to the self-sufficiency of low-income persons allowing them to stretch their available income.

To receive free weatherization services the combined household income must fall at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, which is revised annually. In 2018, a family of four could earn up to $50,200 and qualify for weatherization services. Households with persons receiving either Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are automatically eligible for free weatherization assistance services. If a household meets the income requirements and are approved for weatherization services, the home will be evaluated to identify the most effective energy and dollar saving improvements which can be made. Possible improvements may include: insulation to the attic, walls, and/or floors; replacement of broken glass in primary windows; installation or adjustment of door weather-stripping, thresholds, and/or door sweeps; in addition to an efficiency inspection on natural gas, propane and fuel oil furnaces, boilers and hot water heaters that may include repair and/or replacement.

After weatherization improvements are completed households should notice an increase in comfort, reduced drafts, more even temperatures throughout the home, and a reduction in heating and cooling costs.

For more information contact Housing Director Gin Christiansen at the SENCA Central Office in Humboldt or visit www.senca.org.

SENCA SMART Kicks off the 2018/2019 Year

SENCA staff have already hosted three (3) SENCA SMART (Strategic Money and Resource Techniques) Financial Literacy Programs for the 2018/2019 school year. Several more schools are already on the calendar for upcoming events. Those hosting to-date include: JCC High School, JCC Middle School, and Weeping Water Public Schools.

The program, now in its 8th year, is available to all schools throughout the six (6) county service area of Cass, Otoe, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee and Richardson. Susan Keholm, agency Development Director, is the program coordinator and facilitator. Family Outreach staff from each of the six (6) counties, in addition to the agency CASA Coordinator, are each actively involved with the program. Additional support from school administration, faculty, and staff plus the generous involvement from community volunteers helps make the program a continued success each year.

More than 3,150 students have participated since the program implementation in 2011. On average 80% of participants increase financial awareness by an average 30%.

SENCA Awarded Owner Occupied Rehab (OOR) Funding

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) has awarded SENCA $126,000 to provide Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (OOR) to four (4) homes in our northern service area. Residents in Cass, Otoe, and Sarpy counties, who fall at or below 120% AMI, will be assisted with rehabilitation costs not to exceed $25,000 per home through this grant. Contract negotiations took place in August. Funding will be released to SENCA within the next few months.

Community Partners Invest in Nebraska City Youth

The Wirth Family Foundation of Nebraska City awarded $5,595 to the SENCA Head Start Part-Day Center to make much needed playground repairs. New surfacing material was installed to insure the health and safety of the children. The project included removing the old deteriorated rubber matting, installing proper edging around the playground, and spreading new wood chips. SENCA was notified of the award in late spring and the project was completed in time for the 2018-2019 school year to begin in August.

Auburn Head Start Recognized

Each year during the agency All Staff Meeting a person or group is recognized for going above and beyond the scope of their regular duties and recognized as a Star Performer. This year the award was bestowed to five devoted and caring members of the Auburn Head Start Team. Together they rose above and beyond to help ensure a young student with terminal cancer continued to be a part of the school he truly loved. The team also provided unconditional support to the family throughout the final months of his son’s life.