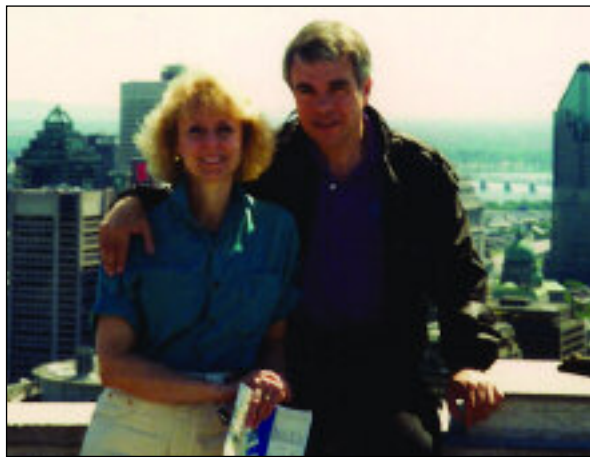


A Very Long Goodbye

Tips for Family Caregivers from Janet Edmunson

By Hunter Howe

One day I noticed that he looked different when he yelled. His eyes revealed a deep fear. After his next panicked yell, I asked Charles, "Is something scaring you?" He clearly replied, yes, his eyes beseeching me for help."



Janet Edmunson, inspirational speaker, author and former health care professional, wrote these poignant words in *Finding Meaning with Charles*, her book about her husband's long battle with a degenerative neurological disease and her experiences as his loving caregiver.

In her book Janet offers encouragement to other caregivers through the lessons she learned and the special affirmations that she sprinkles in throughout this compelling and heartfelt story.

At age 45, due to a number of physical problems, a neurologist determined that Charles had a developing neurological condition. Early on, pinpointing the exact condi-

continued on page 3

Finding Love Later in Life

Dr. Neil Warren on the Search for Compatibility and Companionship

By Peg Brown

A psychologist with a divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. Neil Warren is 75 and lives part of the time along the coast of Maine with his wife Marylyn. He graciously agreed to be interviewed about love and dating later in life.

Since Dr. Warren founded eHarmony ten years ago, it has become one of the largest dating sites on



the Internet. eHarmony is a matchmaking site that matches people based on key dimensions of personality that are scientifically-based predictors of long-term relationship success.

Using the Internet has become part of daily life for people of all ages, so it's little surprise that it has become an accepted and even preferred way for people to meet potential spouses. People over 60 have found tremendous success connecting with a pool of very compatible singles whose paths they would never cross otherwise. On aver-

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Social Workers and more than 30 Volunteer Medicare Advocates from the Southern Maine Agency on Aging have helped 5,000 people with their Medicare and health insurance plans over the last year. Pictured below seated from left, Mary Bruns, Joann Innis and Carol Rancourt. Standing from left, Kathy Baxter, Erin Foley, Mary Hadlock, Sylvia Harkins, Ann Milliard, Katlyn Blackstone, Nancy Gordon, Paula Rutherford, and Jim Baker.

From the Director's Desk

The Boomers are here (and thousands more are following)!!

The year 1946 marked the official start of the Baby Boom as World War II ended and the United States entered nearly two decades of prosperity and high birth rates. In January the first of the Baby Boomers turns 65, and over the next ten years things will get VERY INTERESTING in Maine and especially in this region!

I recently looked at some 2020 population projections for people age 65+. The numbers were eye popping! York County's 65+ population is projected to grow 70% from just under 30,000 to 50,000 people—37% greater than the state average. Cumberland County's 65+ will grow 58% (including yours truly!) from roughly 40,000 to 62,000 people. By



2020, Maine will rank second in the nation for the percentage of residents age 65+; only Florida will be "grayer".

These figures are not really a surprise; we've been talking about the coming "Age Wave" for decades. But looking at the numbers of people SMAA will need to serve just ten years from now is staggering. Not only will there be more older adults, but their family members and friends will need greater support and training to help with the role of caregiving, since the population age 25-64 will actually shrink by six percent over the next ten years.

Fortunately, the critical role played by family caregivers is becoming more recognized and supported. SMAA was recently included in a federal grant to develop a series of advanced classes for the "Savvy Caregiver" course, designed for family members of those with dementia. The goal of the new grant is to expand the skills and knowledge of family caregivers by helping them to plan for their caregiving



roles and encouraging them to use the many support services available through their Agency on Aging. Early planning by taking classes such as "Savvy Caregiver," attending support groups, and learning about available resources can make an enormously positive difference in the caregiving journey.

Turning 65 in 2011?

At SMAA we have more than 40 specially trained staff and volunteers to help you plan your transi-

tion to Medicare. Attend our "Intro to Medicare" seminars, offered six times per month, to get informed about this important milestone. To make an appointment, call 396-6500 or visit our website www.smaa.org to register.

Have a happy and healthy 2011,



Laurence W. Gross
Executive Director, SMAA

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Getting started on Facebook in 5 easy steps

By Deborah MacLean

When my business partner Lynn Peel and I started Maine Senior Guide (www.MaineSeniorGuide.com) it was because we



wanted to gather all the products, services and resources for Maine seniors and their families into one easy-access web-

site. People asked us if we thought Maine seniors would use a website to find information. Absolutely! Along the way, we discovered that many Maine seniors are actively involved in on-line communities, or keeping up with the friends and grandchildren on Facebook.

Want to join Facebook yourself? To get in on the fun, here's how to join in 5 easy steps.

Step 1: Type Facebook into the search box on your browser. Click on **Welcome to Facebook** and you'll get to the Facebook site. That's where you'll sign up for Facebook, which requires your first and last name, email and a password you make up, plus gender and birth date. The email has to be real, since Facebook sends a confirmation back to it. By real, I mean you can't use "info" or "webmaster" or another generic term, and it has to be a working account.

Step 2: Go to the email account you used and confirm your Facebook email.

Step 3: Back at Facebook, fill in the settings under **profile** with appropriate information. If you wish, upload a photograph, preferably of yourself.

Step 4: Go to the **privacy settings** under **account** and decide which parts of your profile you want viewed by everyone and which should be limited to your friends.

Step 5: Find friends. You can search for friends individually in the search box, or ask for friends via school or workplaces past or present. Send friend requests. Let people know what's on your mind or what you're doing by clicking on **status** and writing something, and voila! You're on Facebook!

Bonus step: You'll find a **help center** under **account** that is filled with helpful information on managing your Facebook account, protecting your privacy and connecting with friends. Read the instructions and you'll learn a lot about maximizing your time investment on Facebook.

Check out our new website, Maine Senior Guide, to explore products, services and resources geared towards Maine seniors. There are lots of interesting articles in the library, information from expert bloggers, and an "Ask Lynn" section where you can pose your problems or questions for personal answers. And while you're on the site, be sure and "friend" us on Facebook!



Lynn Peel,
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A Very Long Goodbye

continued from page 1

tion is difficult in many neurological disorders, but frightening medical language suggested, among others, Parkinson's, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy and Cortical Basal Ganglionic Degeneration.

Janet and Charles attended a Mind and Body program at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston. They learned that in order to get through the disease they needed to accept it, that is, find *meaning* out of it. Janet worried how Charles could find meaning out of something so debilitating, so final. She knew she couldn't change the circumstances and she worried how she could maintain a good attitude. Also, she wondered if the advice that Charles' boss gave him, "I hope this makes you better, not bitter," meant Charles would be expected to maintain a positive attitude.

Janet likes to quote Kay Yow, North Carolina State's famous women's basketball coach, who succumbed to breast cancer. "When life kicks you, let it kick you forward."

As Charles' condition worsened, Janet wanted this experience to enrich and deepen their relationship, but she needed to find the inner strength. Fear, guilt and exhaustion consumed her.

"He no longer showed any feelings. He seemed numb to daily existence, almost on autopilot. My heart ached at the loss of his engaging smile and jovial laugh. No longer talking, smiling, laughing or showing emotion—was Charles the man I married. Was he still there?"

Preparing for the inevitable, Janet found that "caregiving is not a sole endeavor." She realized that she couldn't solve everything and wished she'd sought help sooner. To control the emotional and physical toll, she learned to accept help in whatever form it came. "Handling the most basic caregiving needs can be draining, so seek the advice of experts to lighten the load."

In addition to recommending Barbara L. Fredrickson's book, *Positivity*, Janet's tips and life lessons intended to help other caregivers include:

1. Ask for and accept help.
2. None of us is as smart as all of us.
3. Trying personality changes are not your loved one.
4. Don't always expect help from the family.
5. Don't expect that everyone will visit.
6. Look for those special gifts.
7. Let the love flow, even when all else is lost.
8. Have adventures—create memories.



9. Hold on to your passions, the essence of who you are.

10. Stress makes you stupid, impacting the way you think.

Above all, Janet had to come to grips with that sobering notion, life isn't fair. She writes, "That was just the way it was. By accepting this, I was usually able to stay clear of the anger and frustration that can paralyze caregivers."

Over a five-year span, Janet watched Charles gradually die. Ten years ago at age 50 he passed away at home. Janet says, "The grief came in waves. I began to welcome the waves and the release of emotion they brought."

This touching memoir is Janet's own gift to other caregivers. Her uplifting spirit, positive attitude and sheer desire to deal with a very long goodbye, will capture your heart. It's quite clear through reading her book that Janet did find meaning with Charles.

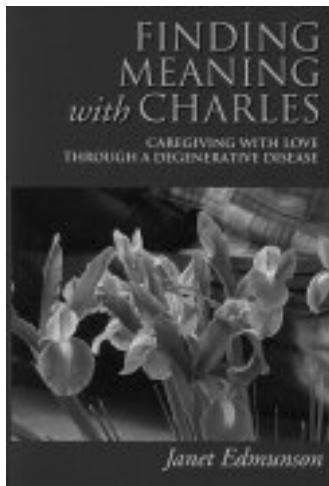
NOTE: Since remarried, Janet lives in South Portland with her husband Jim and his children. Her

website is www.findingmeaning-withcharles.com where you can find more of her inspiration and how to obtain a copy of her book or Charles' book, *Paradoxes of Leadership: Reflections from twenty years of managing a highly participative company*.

Janet's next speaking event: "Affirm Yourself for Life's Challenges" will be Thursday, January 13, 2011 at 6PM sponsored by the Boston Women's Network at the

Hilton Hotel at 89 Broad Street, Financial District, Boston, MA. Contact: Paula Weafer at pkweafer@aol.com or (781) 239-6330 for more information or to register.

If you are a caregiver, call the Family Caregiver Support Program at the Southern Maine Agency on Aging at 1-800-427-7411 and ask for SMAA experts Ann or Kate for assistance or visit www.smaa.org. SMAA's job is to help you!





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136 U.S. Route One,
Scarborough, ME 04074
Telephone: (207) 396-6500
Toll-free: 1-800-427-7411
e-mail: info@smaaa.org
Web site: www.smaaa.org

Editor: Eileen Whynot
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(207) 396-6512

Advertising: Nancy Bloch
seniornews@smaaa.org or
(207) 396-6588

Design: Becky Delaney, Yarmouth
Printing: Sun Prints, Lewiston

Circulation: Mailed to 14,500 households in southern Maine and 5,000 copies are delivered to newsstands. An additional 1000 copies are distributed through Agency on Aging events and locations.

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Improve the physical, social, emotional and economic well being of older adults living in southern Maine (Cumberland and York counties).

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA) is a non-profit, charitable organization. Services of SMAA are supported in part by state and federal funds from the Maine Office of Elder Services. Learn more at www.smaaa.org or by calling 207-396-6500 or 1-800-427-7411.



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Is Hospice Taboo?

By Arlene Wing, RN, MHSA

In our society, many people still consider death to be a taboo subject. A common belief in Western society is that death is the worst thing that can happen to a person. Yet, the fact is that we all die. There is a joke that no matter how hard modern medicine has tried to change the death rate, it's still one per person. It may be inevitable, but we sure do avoid talking about it.



What happens to the person who knows or suspects that they are terminally ill? People tell us that on some level, they know when they are dying. Once their physician tells them that they have a limited time to live and why, they can then choose how to deal with the time that they have left. There is universally an emotional response to this news. While some people show emotions outwardly and some hold it in, profound feelings are experienced.

It is often painful for others to witness this emotional response. What is important to remember is that this is the beginning of the ill person's necessary processing of this information. Their hope will change, but will not be lost. Realis-

tic hope is empowering while unrealistic hope is exhausting, as people work to keep up the façade of everything being all right or maintaining the pretended status quo. Once people know the truth, they can choose how they will carry on from here. There's a huge amount of work to be done and having the gift of time can be a blessing.

Hospice is for people who are in the last phase of their life with a limited life expectancy. Most hospices serve people with a life expectancy of six months or less. We are powerless to change the fact that people are dying. Hospice services can impact how comfortable people are while they are dying. Comfort is addressed in all realms of a person's existence including social, emotional, spiritual, and physical pain and distress.

Most people stay in their own homes, but services can also be provided in care facilities. Hospice workers are good listeners and are taught to be comfortable with listening to strong emotional content. Often the greatest gift we can give is simply remaining in the presence of someone who wants to talk about their feelings and fears. It is more difficult than one might think, to quiet our mind and not inadvertent-

ly "shut down" the other person.

Anyone can call to request hospice. If a patient or family member calls to ask for hospice services, the nurse can call the physician to get the necessary information. A nurse will come to the ill person and their family to conduct the admission process, or to simply give information and answer questions. Services will be tailored to meet the individual's needs for comfort and symptom control. Services include nursing, personal care, social work, chaplain, volun-

teers, physician, and occupational, physical and speech therapies. Needed medications and equipment are also managed by the hospice. All health insurance policies provided in Maine are required by law to have a hospice benefit. Many hospices provide services regardless of ability to pay.

Is hospice taboo to you? It's something to think about and perhaps talk about with your family and doctor. If you or someone you know needs hospice, please call your local hospice program to request more information.

Arlene Wing is the Chief Executive Officer of Hospice of Southern Maine.

"To many people the word hospice equates with a death sentence. To those who work in hospice, hospice equates to comfort."

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To register and for more information contact Anne Murray or Liz Weaver at 1-800-427-7411.

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Is caring for an older loved one leaving you feeling tired, isolated, sad, guilty, stressed? Caregiving may be the most difficult and rewarding thing you'll ever do. The Family Caregiver Support Program can help.

Caregiver Support Group Changes

We are in the process of rethinking some of our caregiver support groups, based on feedback from participants and our professional advisors. The group that had been meeting in Windham has stopped for now, and the group that meets on the first Monday of the month at the Maine Medical Center Geriatric Center will stop meeting after February 7th. Thank you to the Geriatric Center for their hospitality for the past three years and to Karen Ditmars for her willingness to adapt her work schedule to accommodate the group meeting.

We are fortunate to have several knowledgeable people willing to consult with us about improving the effectiveness of our support groups

and restructuring them to meet participant needs.

Our Scarborough, Bridgton and online groups are not changing. The groups run through Community Partners in Biddeford (now on the 2nd Monday) and the York Hospital Heart Health Institute are also continuing. Please see the support group schedule in this issue of "Senior News."

If you are looking for a caregiver support group, please call Ann O'Sullivan or Kate Dulac at SMAA (1-800-427-7411) and we will be happy to share information about other groups in the area. It will be helpful to us to hear what you need, so that we can incorporate that into our planning.

Support/Discussion Groups

Is caring for an aging family member or friend leaving you feeling... Tired... Isolated... Sad...

Guilty... Stressed? Want to talk with other people in the same situation and share ideas?

Biddeford: For caregivers of people with dementia. 2nd Monday of the month, 3-4:30PM, at Community Partners, Inc. Contact Barbara Alberda, 229-4308.

Bridgton: Caring for Your Aging Family Members; 2nd Wednesday of the month, 1-2:30PM, at the Bridgton Community Center. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541. Respite care is available on site.

Scarborough: Caring for Your Aging Family Members, 4th Thursday of the month, from noon to 1PM at SMAA. Contact Kate Dulac at 1-800-427-7411 x 558.

York: Caregiver support group for family and friends assisting an older adult with a chronic condition, 3rd Tuesday of the month, from 1-2PM, at the Heart Health Institute. Contact Susan Kelly-Westman at 351-3700.

Other areas: Please call Kate or Ann at SMAA's Family Caregiver Support Program if you are looking for a group in another area. 1-800-427-7411

Kinship/Grandparent Support Group

Sanford: Wee Care, support and discussion for kinship parents and grandparents helping to raise children. 2nd Wednesday of the month, 5:30-7PM. Supper and child care available. Contact Thea Murphy at Trafton Senior Center, at 457-0080.

On-Line Discussion and Support Group

We sponsor a free online support group. This 24 hour/day message board is simple enough for even the least experienced computer user. Join and connect with other family caregivers. If you are caring for an aging family member or friend, and have Internet access, please join us! Contact Kate at SMAA, 1-800-427-7411 or online@smaa.org.

Memory and Aging

By Ann O'Sullivan, OTR/L, LSW, Family Caregiver Specialist

Many of us worry about memory loss as we all get older. Sometimes we are concerned that trouble with remembering is a sign of dementia coming on.

As we age, many body processes, including those in the brain, become slower. We may take longer to learn new information, have trouble coming up with names or misplace objects. While frustrating, these are not signs of significant cognitive loss. We can engage in physical, mental and social activities to help our brains stay healthy and use strategies, such as list-making to compensate.

In general, we should get concerned about cognitive loss when it affects a person's daily function and social interaction. Other conditions and factors, such as hypothyroidism, medication side effects, infections, or vitamin deficiencies, can cause cognitive problems including memory loss. Depression, in partic-



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ular, mimics dementia in many ways. If you are worried about your own or someone else's memory, a good medical workup is an important first step, because appropriate treatment can alleviate an underlying problem.

When a person is having significant cognitive problems and other conditions have been ruled out or treated, dementia may be present. "Dementia" is a general term to describe symptoms such as memory loss, difficulty with abstract thinking, reasoning, problem solving, language, judgment, attention, and/or organization—all of which impair thought and social functioning. While the word "dementia" describes a group of symptoms, it is not by itself a diagnosis, because it doesn't explain WHY the person is having problems. A thorough workup by a professional well-versed in cognitive issues is an important step both for treatment and planning for the future.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common underlying cause of dementia, with vascular dementia the next most frequent. Recent research shows that a large number of people may be experiencing a combination of the two. Other conditions may also cause dementia. Although cures have not yet been found, medications help slow the process for some people. In general, good nutrition, regular exercise, and cognitive / social engagement help all of us remain as healthy as possible.

For people experiencing cognitive loss, strategies for both the person and their caregiver(s) can help compensate for cognitive losses and support independence and contentment. Daily routines become increasingly important. Memory aids (calendars, notes) may help. Some ways of communicating usually become more effective than others.

There are resources in the community for people with dementia and those who care about them. The Alzheimer's Association offers training and support. The Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA is offering the Savvy Caregiver series, which helps family and friends who are assisting a person with dementia who lives in the community. Our

Resource Specialists can assist with identifying and connecting with other community resources, and the Family Caregiver Support Program staff is available to help problem solve individual situations.

It is important to remember that not all memory loss is dementia, that memory loss which impairs daily function is not normal and that there is help available. People with cognitive loss, and those who care about them, are not alone.

Caregiver Tip Sheets

To recognize National Family Caregiver Month in November, several additional tip sheets were added to the Family Caregiver page on the SMAA website www.smaa.org. A new link has also been added that allows you to go directly to the Family Caregiver page from the home page. There are then links on the right that take you to all family caregiving information including support groups, classes and tip sheets. Please explore the various handouts there and feel free to print what is helpful to you!

Help For People Helping Aging Family Members

Are you assisting an older adult? Do you spend time helping with errands, household chores, finances, meals, health care or personal care? If so, then you are a family caregiver. The Family Caregiver Support Program can help support you as you help someone else.

Class Schedule 2011

January 4, 11, 18, 25 and February 1 and 8, 2011, 1-3PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Scarborough. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register (required).

January 5, 12, 19 and 26, 4-6PM: **Putting the Puzzle Together: Getting Ready to Offer Support to Older Adult Family and Friends**. Nason Community Center, Springvale. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register.

February 2, 6:15-7:30PM: **Beginning Planning for Eldercare**. Wells-Ogunquit Adult Community Education. Call 646-4565 to register.

February 9, 16, March 2, 9, 16 and 23, 6-8PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Gorham Adult Education, Gorham. Contact Kate Dulac at 1-800-427-7411 x 558 to pre-register (required).

February 10, 6-7:30PM: **Solutions for the Sandwich Generation**. Jewish Family Services, Portland. Contact JFS at 772-1959 to register.

February 17, 6-7:15PM: **Beginning Planning for Eldercare**. Crooked River Adult Education, Casco. Call 627-4291 to register.

March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5 and 12, 4:30-6:30PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Crooked River Adult Education, Casco. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register (required).

April 4, 11, 25, May 2, 9 and 16, 1-3PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Senior Center at Lower Village, Kennebunk. Contact Kate Dulac at 1-800-427-7411 x 558 to pre-register (required).

April 21, 28, May 5 and 12, 5:30-7:30PM: **Putting the Puzzle Together: Getting Ready to Offer Support to Older Adult Family and Friends**. Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Scarborough. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register.

April 27, 6-7:30PM: **Options for Older Drivers**. Windham Adult Ed, Windham. Call 892-1819 to register.

May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, and June 7, 5:30-7:30PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Scarborough. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register (required).

May 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28 and July 5, 1-3PM: **Savvy Caregiver**. The Gathering Place, Kittery. Contact Kate Dulac at 1-800-427-7411 x 558 to pre-register (required).

July 6, 13, 20, 27, August 3 and 10, 9:30-11:30AM: **Savvy Caregiver**. Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Scarborough. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541 to pre-register (required).

Please use the numbers listed to register. Feel free to call Kate Dulac or Ann O'Sullivan at SMAA (1-800-427-7411) with questions.

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Doctors and Patients Don't Have to Rely on TV for Drug Information

Physicians have better sources than salesmen and advertisements to guide prescribing choices.

By Jennifer Reck

Pharmaceutical manufacturers reported spending \$90.6 million on marketing prescription drugs in Maine in 2008, according to a report by Maine's Department of Health and Human Services. This figure represents an increase of 33% over the \$68 million spent in 2007. Though pharmaceutical marketing expenditures are increasing, a recent report by the market intelligence firm Access Monitor reveals that in 2009 the number of doctors willing to see most pharmaceutical sales representatives fell by 20% and the number who would see no "reps" at all increased by 50%.

This data reflects an ongoing trend among doctors to limit pharmaceutical representatives' access to their practices. Physicians are saying "no" to industry marketing and "yes" to independent sources of information on prescription drugs.

As this shift away from information provided by sales representatives is taking place, where can doctors turn for reliable, unbiased information?

One new option is the Maine Independent Clinical Information Service, also known as MICIS. This program was launched last summer and is administered by the Maine

Medical Association on behalf of the state. Its educational materials are produced by independent clinical experts from Harvard Medical School with no commercial ties to the pharmaceutical industry. They perform exhaustive reviews of the evidence to provide the information your doctor needs to help make the best drug choices for you.

To date, the program has reached approximately 350 Maine prescribers through outreach visits to discuss educational modules on type 2 diabetes and anti-platelet therapy. Survey responses to these modules have been very positive.

Consumers can also get involved and take advantage of independent information on prescription drugs provided by the nonprofit Consumers Union, publisher of the popular "Consumer Reports" magazine. Their freely accessible website, "Consumer Reports Health Best Buy Drugs" (www.crbestbuydrugs.org), compares the safety, efficacy and costs of commonly used medications. This information provides a better starting point for a conversation with your doctor about prescription drugs than an ad seen on TV. If you are intrigued by an ad though, before you ask your doctor, check this website for its AdWatch video series to learn about the important information these ads leave out.

Doctors and patients are making important changes to the practice of medicine when they turn to independent sources for information on prescription drugs such as MICIS and Consumer Reports' "Health Best Buy Drugs."

Join the trend by looking for independent information and make sure you are getting the best drug for you at the best price.

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging has trained staff and volunteers to assist Medicare-eligible beneficiaries with prescription drug (Plan D) choices based on the plans available in Maine. Call for an appointment with SMAA for unbiased help with all Medicare and health insurance options. 1-800-427-7411 or in the Portland calling area, 396-6500.



Prescription Policy Choices

Jennifer Reck is a policy analyst at Prescription Policy Choices (PCP) in Hallowell. PPC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) educational and public policy organization that works to expand access to safe, effective and affordable prescription drugs. Learn more about PPC @ www.policychoices.org.

S.O.S. Phones Provide a Sense of Security



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Southern Maine Agency on Aging collects old cell phones and distributes reconditioned phones to older adults and adults aged 18+ with disabilities who need easy access to dial 911 in case of emergency. S.O.S. Phones are cell phones equipped with 911 dialing capabilities for use in emergencies providing a Sense Of Security (S.O.S.). The phones come with chargers and instructions and will only work to dial 911. Contact Southern Maine Agency on Aging at 1-800-427-7411 or (207) 396-6500 to sign up for a phone.

If you have old cell phones to donate, please drop them at the SMAA office at 136 U.S. Route One in Scarborough or at the Gorham or Westbrook police stations. SMAA welcomes the help of school or community groups in collecting phones to be reconditioned.

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Each apartment has its own private entrance and includes a living room, full kitchen (with great amenities including dishwasher and garbage disposal), and bathroom. Each unit has a washer/dryer hookup and an attached one-car garage.

Larrabee Heights is located on a quiet cul-de-sac behind Main Street in Westbrook.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Keepers of the House

by Shirley Ann Grau (1964)

Book Review by Don Caouette

Among other things, America in the 1960s was a time when racial unrest reached its breaking point, particularly in the south. There was Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat to a white person and move to the back of the bus. Then there were the marches led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Selma, Alabama and Washington, D.C. where King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. These events were followed by the civil rights acts that finally gave black Americans their long-overdue right to equality.

It is against this background that Shirley Ann Grau writes her Pulitzer Prize winning novel. She takes us through seven generations of the white, well-respected Howland family. They have all lived in the same house in the Deep South from the early nineteenth century pre-Civil War era to the time when William Howland becomes head of the family. William is an intelligent, open-minded family man who has done many good things for the community. He marries a woman named Abigail who dies early in their marriage but not before giving birth to his granddaughter, also named Abigail.

Following William's death it is through Abigail's eyes that we learn many things about the Howland family and their relationship to the community and more importantly, how the past comes to influence life in the present. Abigail marries a man named John Tolliver who is a lawyer and decides to run for governor. In order to win the election, Tolliver must support questionable organizations. But it is only at the end of this most interesting novel that Abigail becomes aware of the most shocking family secret imaginable. How Abigail deals with this revelation sets the course for her life and that of many others.

Having been born and raised in the south, Ms. Grau is well-qualified to give us a portrayal of both the black and white cultures. Over the course of the novel, she depicts the changing values and norms, the complexities of life in the South, and does not avoid illustrating the hypocrisy of racism. The latter she witnessed firsthand when the KKK burned a cross on her front lawn following the publishing of her book.

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Protecting Yourself: Be Proactive

By Jessica Wood



Recognizing and understanding fraud can sometimes be difficult tasks, especially in light of the wide variety of fraudulent activities one might encounter. Coping with identity theft, stolen credit or debit cards, lottery scams, and compromised accounts, for example, can sound overwhelming and complicated. The thought of having to protect oneself against these threats can be equally daunting. The information I share here is not drawn from my work history or experience or my educational background, but from things that each of us have: life experience and the ability to be proactive.

Being proactive and drawing from our experience needn't be complicated or time consuming. Have you ever received information in the mail stating that you won the sweepstakes yet you never entered the lottery in the first place? Have you received a random check in the mail from an unknown individual or entity? You may well have a feeling that the origin of these checks is suspect. Listen to that inner voice! If you receive questionable items, it is likely that they are not legitimate, so trust your judgment and life experience.

Fraudsters can be persistent and also creative and sophisticated. For instance, I have encountered individuals who responded to an ad on Craigslist for employment, or who posted an ad online for an item to be sold, who later became victims of a scam. In these cases, the victims are contacted by phone or email by an individual who appears to be legitimate and who offers employment or to purchase an item you are selling. In turn, a check, typically much higher than expected (red flag!), arrives several days later by Fed-Ex, accompanied by a note asking the victim to deposit the check into their account and then to wire the extra amount in the check (red flag!) to another location. In these cases, the fraudster is

hoping the victim will deposit the check and wire the extra funds before the bank discovers that the overly-large check is not collectable. By then the "extra amount" is in the hands of the fraudster.

Such crooks may appear legitimate by providing a full name, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and using Fed-Ex or other valid-appearing tools, but these are tactics employed simply to mask red flags. Victims of these forms of scams often admit that they had felt uncertain about the entire transaction, but proceeded because they thought they 'had nothing to lose' or felt as though they had finally 'caught a break.'

However, we often overlook our own ability to protect ourselves. Should something present itself that appears suspicious, bring it to the attention of a professional right away, even if you are not entirely sure it is a hoax. Most importantly, never underestimate the value of your life experience, your judgment and your ability to be proactive. Your actions can have a direct effect on whether or not you become the victim of a scam.

Jessica Wood is an Investigator at Key Bank. She may be reached at Jessica_Wood@KeyBank.com or 207.294.7376.

Donor's Challenge Surpassed in Record Time Meals on Wheels Benefits

By Peg Brown



Eddie Woodin announced on October 20 during a donor reception at Harold and Claudia Pachios' home in Cape Elizabeth that he was creating a Challenge to benefit Meals on Wheels. He had just pledged \$1,000 for Meals on Wheels and announced that he would give another \$1,000 when SMAA raised \$8,000 from people giving \$1,000 or more to Meals on Wheels for the first time. He wanted to provide an incentive for individuals to increase their giving to help homebound older people in southern Maine through the Southern Maine Agency on Aging.

As we go to press, near the end of the year, six donors have given \$13,000 for Meals on Wheels, with more expected in the New Year. Thank you, Eddie, for your philanthropic example and this challenge!

If you would like to join Eddie and other individuals by making a major gift of \$1,000 or more to Meals on Wheels, you can do so by contacting Peg Brown, Director of Development at 207 396-6590 or mbrown@smaaa.org or by making a gift through www.smaaa.org.

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Finding Love Later in Life

continued from page 1

age, about 542 eHarmony members of all ages marry every day in the United States according to research conducted by Harris Interactive in 2009.

The oldest male eHarmony registrant is 96 years old and lives outside San Diego, California. The oldest female registrant is 90 years old and lives in New York City. They are both active on eHarmony and are communicating with their matches!

Special thanks to Martin Womer, a Southern Maine Agency on Aging board member, who made the initial contact with Dr. Warren. My interview with Dr. Warren follows.

Brown: How is dating at age 60 and over different than younger in life?

Warren: As people age they have more opinions, are clearer about their values, and have stricter personal boundaries. They are wiser and don't want to take any chances with safety. They want freedom to move in and out of relationships. This is why dating relationships in general tend to be more complicated.

Brown: What differences are there between men and women using eHarmony?

Warren: There is an enormous difference between men and women. Some women are more willing to commit to a relationship than men. However, there are approximately as many men as women on eHarmony, and the site is all about great long-term relationships, so men on the site desire that, too.

A lot of women wait for men to contact them on eHarmony, keeping to the offline dating traditions. I think women should be just as proactive as men on the site to increase their chances for success.

Men and women are about even in the distance they are willing to travel for a relationship. Most eHarmony registrants prefer matches within a 30-mile radius, but there are many who would look—and find their soul mates—anywhere in the world!

Brown: I know you are proud of how many eHarmony couples marry. What do you think of people marrying later in life?

Warren: I am a huge believer in marriage in your later years. A personal example: My widowed 91-year old dad called me from his retirement community and said he wanted me to listen carefully to two things he needed to tell me. "One, I'm terribly lonely. Two, my sex drive is so strong I don't know what to do." There was a long pause before I could respond. My dad and I had never talked like this in our entire lives. Finally I said, "Dad, do you have a woman in mind?" "Yes," he replied, "I have made a list of seven women who would make a great wife." "Does one rise to the top?" I asked. "As a matter of fact there is one woman, and she is 86." "Do you know anything about her? Have you talked to her?" I asked. "No, not yet."

My father married this woman within the year.

More and more people are living to over 100, so why not be married? It is a beautiful thing. My wife Marylyn and I have been married for 51 years. It's so much nicer to feel close and share life. I recommend reading *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier and Better Off Financially* by Maggie Gallagher and Linda Waite, and my book, *Finding the Love of Your Life*.

Brown: Just how hard is it to find dates as you age?

Warren: It has never been easier! On eHarmony we have a huge pool

of candidates, approximately 33 million registrants who are matched on the 29 Dimensions of Compatibility I developed. We receive an average of 10,000 to 15,000 new registrations a day. eHarmony works very well for those who have been married before, and 60+ people have found great success on the site. On average, 542 people every day get married in the United States to people they meet on eHarmony—4.7 % of new marriages in the US during the study period! Currently we are trying to do a study on divorce, but so far have found few divorces among the couples who have married via eHarmony over the past 10 years since we started the service.

We take the safety of our users very seriously. Through a series of questions, our relationship questionnaire detects people who are lying or trying to game the system.

Brown: Is it harder for older women to find single men to date?

Warren: The challenges for older women in Maine are due more to Maine's demographics than anything else. With only 1.3 million people in the state, the number of men available of similar ages who live within a reasonable distance of your home who are suitable eHarmony matches is limited. I recommend to women that when they get an eHarmony match, they shouldn't wait, but make contact immediately. There is about a 50/50 split between the number of men and women who are registered on eHarmony, so women should be just as proactive as men when considering contacting a match.

Brown: Do most men prefer to date younger women?

Warren: I find that more men are looking for women who are closer to them in age, rather than much

younger. Statistically, women are better off marrying men who are younger than they are, as women are likely to live longer. And I can understand how a 75 year-old woman may not want to date an 85 year-old man because she doesn't want to end up taking care of him.

Brown: There are many jokes about the physical decline of older people and love and dating that are so negative and demeaning. What is good about life, love and dating over age 60?

Warren: I founded eHarmony at the age of 65 and I am 75 now. These are the years when you really come into your own in judgment and wisdom. You are very experienced about life in general. You learn that a bad marriage is 1,000 times worse than no marriage at all. Most people between the ages of 60 and 70 have someone very dear to them die—great and hard lessons learned. I have a very high regard for older people. They have attributes that others don't.

My wife Marylyn is now 73. Every year I notice more physical and emotional qualities she didn't have when younger. We play tennis together and have such a good time. As we age, we seem to lose some of our competitiveness and instead develop companionship qualities.

Brown: You are a psychologist, a writer, and an entrepreneur. What interests you at the moment?

Warren: Recently I have been thinking about the fact that 65% of people don't like their current job, and so I wonder how we could facilitate better matches between peoples' interests and needs and their jobs.

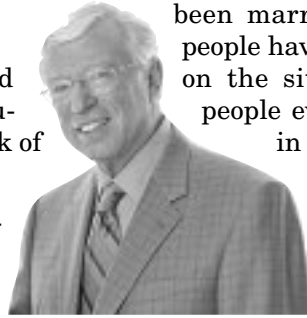
I recommend reading *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection* by William Patrick and a friend of mine, John Cacioppo. It reveals loneliness to be a real problem for so many. People of all ages report they don't have a single confidant with whom they can talk. So I am wondering if I could develop an on-line service that would help people find compatible people to become friends and confidants.

Even though I no longer have management responsibilities at eHarmony and haven't done a television commercial for at least five years, people still come up to me and say, "Are you that older gentleman that used to be on the eHarmony TV ad?" I like when this happens.

Recently I was in New York City's Times Square. There's a huge eHarmony billboard there that displayed the pictures of thousands of married couples who had found each other on eHarmony.

To see that was so very exciting and rewarding!

Peg Brown is the Director of Development at SMAA. You can reach her at mbrown@smaa.org or 207-396-6590.





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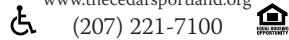
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The Southern Maine Agency on Aging would like to thank the following people who made gifts in honor or in memory of loved ones for the year ending September 30, 2010.

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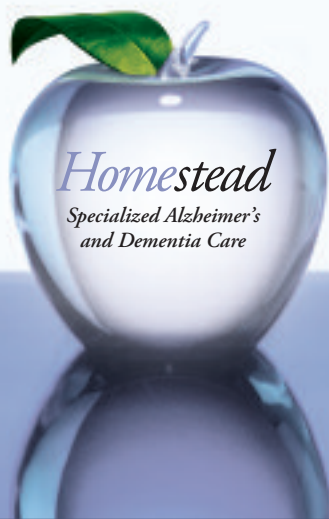
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- Susan, family member of resident



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Tom O'Connor, SMAA Finance Director, volunteered in a Portland kitchen on Christmas Day. More than 200 people who were home alone received a holiday ham dinner through the SMAA Meals on Wheels program.



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TRIAD News Corner

A TRIAD is a partnership involving older adults, law enforcement and community support services (agencies on aging, care provider businesses and non-profits, legal services, clergy, etc.) who agree to work together. TRIADS seek to reduce the criminal victimization of older adults and enhance the delivery of services for seniors. TRIADS provide the opportunity for the regular exchange of information between representatives of law enforcement, support services and seniors.

Send TRIAD news for publication in "Senior News" to ewhynot@smaa.org or call 396-6512.

Need a Warm Coat? Plenty of Choices

L.L.Bean
Goodwill

Volunteers from Maine's TRIADS collected coats at LL Bean in Freeport back in November for older adults in need of a warm coat. The Southern Maine Agency on Aging has vouchers for coats to be redeemed at any of the area Goodwill retail stores. Locations include: Biddeford, Brunswick, Falmouth, Gorham, Lewiston, Portland, Scarborough, South Portland and Windham. If you are over age 60 and need a coat, contact SMAA at 1-800-427-7411 or from the Portland calling area, 396-6500.

Save the Date

Fun Fair for Seniors June 7 at the USM Field House in Gorham.



All welcome! To get involved, contact Terri Norton at In-Home Senior Services 856-1212.

The next meeting of the Gorham Westbrook TRIAD is January 14 at 8:45 AM at the Westbrook Public Safety Building. The February meeting will be Friday the 11th at 8:45 AM at the Gorham Municipal Center. To get involved, contact Doris Ames at 839-2948 or David Garthe at 839-5407.

Snow Shoveling

The Gorham Westbrook TRIAD is working with the University of Southern Maine's Delta Chi fraternity to provide volunteers to shovel snow for seniors. If you live in Gorham and need shoveling or you can volunteer, call Mary Vetterline at 839-7707. If you live in Westbrook and need shoveling or you can volunteer, call Fred Collins at 854-8327.

Sidewalk Snow Shoveling for Portland Residents age 65 or older

Call Joan Sheedy at 774-7616 to sign up for the winter. Joan will take phone calls from volunteers with shovels, too!

Mapping the Brain: The Role of Speech Therapy with Dementia

By Courtney Thims
Speech-Language Pathologist

Maps help you to find your way in a new city, orient you when you haven't been somewhere in a while and help you get around detours or determine how long it will take to arrive at your destination. Maps also may illustrate topographical variations, or uncover small alleyways in ancient cities.

For a long time, Alzheimer's disease and all forms of dementia have been without hands-on navigational guides, so that a diagnosis of memory loss is like landing in a new city without a map. Moreover, the "terrain" of cognitive loss is still being discovered by ongoing research, and also there is much variance in the effect that dementia can have on an individual. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs)—the equivalent of personal mapmakers and guides—can be highly beneficial in navigating the topography of the human brain, that is, in finding the alleyways in the unfamiliar city of dementia.

A Speech-Language Pathologist's intervention at all stages of the disease includes the following measures:

- 1) The stage/severity of the disease and its effect on functioning;
- 2) The patient's residual strengths that can be used;
- 3) Appropriate strategies to compensate for the deficits in certain areas; and,
- 4) Environmental modifications to maximize function and independence.

The intervention's outcome would ensure that the patient's basic needs for safety, health and quality of life are being met by the patient or by the caregivers.

"Really? A speech therapist can help with memory loss?"

Because language and cognition are closely tied, addressing one without understanding the influence of the other is not effective. In the early to mid stages of memory loss, the way information is processed is partially to blame when things are not remembered. Strategies to help a person change the processing, so as to remember new information, include breaking information down into smaller bits by such means as categorizing, chunking and association. All of these helpful methods involve the language processes in the brain.

As the disease progresses, a

breakdown in communication can be a barrier to the successful completion of daily tasks, which can prevent basic needs from being met. As communication deteriorates, the person with dementia may have an increase in adverse behavioral responses. In this case, a SLP who specializes in cognitive-linguistic impairments related to dementia can provide the patient and his or her family the necessary tools to help maintain the highest quality of life.

Courtney Thims provides in-home intervention for individuals at all stages of cognitive loss. Services are covered by Medicare Part B, along with many other health insurance policies.

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Living Well for Better Health Workshops

Winter Schedule

Casco Bay YMCA
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To register: 865-9600
Thursdays, 1-3:30PM
January 6 - February 17

MaineHealth LRC
100 Route One, Scarborough
To register: Bill Allen 396-8570
Wednesdays, 9:30AM-12NOON
January 12 - February 16
(February 23 snowdate)

DHHS employees
Forest Ave., Portland
Tuesdays, 1-3:30PM
January 11 - February 14

The Pines
Manor Rd., Ocean Park
Wednesdays, 9:30AM-12NOON
January 19 - February 23

Nasson Community Center
457 Main St., Springvale
Mondays, 9:30AM-12NOON
February 7 - March 14

"Now I have the energy to do the things that matter. I am calmer and more confident about my health. I got relief from my pain." --workshop participant

"Living Well provides tools for living the best life you can. It breaks down changing behavior into bite-size pieces and you build on success." --workshop participant

MaineHealth LRC
5 Bucknam Rd., Falmouth
Register: Bill Allen 396-8570
Fridays, 10AM - 12:30PM
February 18 - March 25

Portland YMCA
70 Forest Ave., Portland
To register: 874-1111
Tuesdays, 2:30-5PM
March 1 - April 5

Are you concerned about falling? Is your fear making you less active and more isolated than you would like to be? Sign up for an eight-session "Matter of Balance" workshop. You will feel more confident, more stable and have an opportunity to meet others who are dealing with

"I so enjoyed the class. The exercises are helping me be less of a tottering old lady and a more of an active one." --workshop participant

Start your new year off right. Learn proven strategies for helping you meet your goals. Create your own Action Plan. Living Well for Better Health is a fun, interactive workshop that provides valuable strategies for personalizing nutrition and exercise, for managing pain and stress, for getting the most out of doctor's visits

A Matter of Balance Classes

Winter Schedule

Portland YMCA
70 Forest Ave., Portland
Call 874-1111
Fridays, 9-11AM
January 7 - February 25

similar concerns. Sessions focus on understanding and controlling the fear of falling, increasing activity in reasonable ways, setting realistic goals for physical activity, changes you can make in your home to reduce your risk of falling and tools and tips for maneuvering more safely outside and in public.

"When I started, I was having a problem with stairs. Now, I feel more confident and using stairs instead of an elevator." --workshop participant

and much more. If you have aches and pains, feel tired, are concerned about your weight, are stressed or are dealing with other issues (such as arthritis, heart or lung disease, depression and others) this course is for you. Any adult who has an ongoing health condition is welcome. A family member, friend, or caregiver can also participate.

Southern Maine Agency on Aging
136 U.S. Route One, Scarborough
Call 396-6529
Wednesdays, 2-4PM
February 23 - April 13

Freeport YMCA
14 Old South Freeport Rd., Freeport
Call 865-9600
Tuesdays, 1:45-3:45PM
March 1 - April 19

Maine Health LRC
5 Bucknam Rd., Falmouth
Call 885-8570
Wednesdays, 1-3PM
March 23 - May 11

To register for workshops or for more information about Living Well for Better Health or a Matter of Balance, call 1-800-427-7411 and speak to Anne Murray (Ext. 529) or Liz Weaver (Ext. 578) Or email amurray@smaa.org or lweaver@smaa.org.

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Nomenclatures

By Louise Hirshberg

Senior, elder, retiree, older person, these seem to be the labels to identify the over 60s. But these titles are not how I want to think of myself. While I am way over 60, I am not denying my age but somehow I do not feel "old" so I do not want to be called a senior, an elder, or retiree. I become incensed when I see an article in the morning newspaper stating, "Elderly person hit by car." Upon reading further, the elder is 65 years old. "65," I say to myself, when did that get to be old? Of course I know that this article was probably written by a 20-year-old and I suppose 65 is elderly to that young reporter but it sure isn't to me.

Many years ago I ran a country store gift shop and one of our most popular items was a pair of dolls, Grammy and Grandpa who sat on their rocking chairs. They were the "retired" dolls. "Grandma" had her mousy gray hair pulled in a tight bun, wore metal rimmed eye glasses and was dressed in a calico printed dress, under her bib apron, high black shoes on her feet and she was knitting. "Grandpa" was smoking a pipe, his glasses down over his nose, with a visor hat, plaid shirt, baggy pants held up with suspenders and he was reading his newspaper. This was what "retirement" getting old, elderly, represented. But today, I do not know people like this. My contemporaries are not whiling away their days in their rocking chairs. No, today people I know are either still working or are volunteering, doing child care to help their working children, taking classes, traveling, and exercising energetically their bodies and minds.

The good news is, as our baby boomers are becoming AARP members and growing older themselves, they too seem to struggle with how to be labeled. For example, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire the senior center has dropped the name senior and is now called Connections. Elderhostel, a popular company that has been offering educational trips to the over 55 group is now called Road Scholar. I am happy to see we are making strides but I think finding the right nomenclature is still a struggle for me. Please don't call me a senior, elder or old person. Let's put our heads together and find a new way to address where we are in our lives. One that says we are active and alive not ending our years in our rocking chairs.

Louise Hirshberg lives in Kittery, Maine and can be reached at 207-439-4642 or louisehir@comcast.net.

"I highly recommend SMAA. Wonderful services and dedicated staff."

—Ruth H.

Community Education

Is Assisted Living In Your Future?

Everything you wanted to know about Assisted Living but didn't know who to ask: Wednesday, January 25 from 6:30-7:30PM at the Southern Maine Agency on Aging office in Scarborough.

Find answers to questions you have about assisted living and learn what questions to ask. This presentation was developed for both people thinking about assisted living and their adult children. Today's assisted living consumers have more choices than ever and this range of choices can add to confusion.

We will review aspects of assisted living such as services, accommodations, payment sources and licensing levels. Program developed by Bay Square, Birchwoods at Canco, Inn at Village Square, The Osher Inn, Scarborough Terrace, Seventy-Five State Street and Piper Shores. There is no fee; however, please call Lori Maxwell at 775-7775 to pre-register (encouraged). Sweets and refreshments.

Free Social Security Seminar

Wednesday, February 9, at 6pm at the Falmouth Memorial Library, 5 Lunt Road, Falmouth.

Rob Clark, our local Public Affairs Specialist with Social Security, will be speaking about benefits, eligibility, and enrollment. For more information, contact Carole Vreeland at 781-5057. Sponsored by the Edward Jones office in Falmouth.

American Cancer Society's "I Can Cope"

Free series begins February 23, 6-7PM at the Cancer Care Center, Sanford. Knowledge is power. The more you know, the better equipped you will be to handle each step of your journey with cancer. For topics and to register for one class or more, call 207 459-1606.

"Welcome to Medicare" Seminars

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging offers seminars to help you sort through your Medicare options—and to help you enroll. If you are turning 65, consider registering to attend one of these seminars to help you realize the greatest benefits.

Registration is required. Call 396-6500 in the Portland area or 1-800-427-7411 to sign up. Seminars

are two hours long, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Locations include, Scarborough, Springvale and Windham.

"I enjoy receiving the Senior News very much."
—J.W., Wells, Maine

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- wellness and exercise center
- library and computer center

On Being Prepared Part II

by Carole O. Welch,
RN, MSN



Preparing to live without your spouse or companion can be an overwhelming and confusing time in your life. While caring for your loved one personally or having him or her cared for by others, you will still need to be thinking about how you'll be able to manage in the days ahead.

To be very practical and right to the point, a fire-proof filing system is crucial to being more organized. There may be one in place already but make sure that it is one that works for you. Within your A-Z file include a folder just for income tax receipts. You'll be very happy you did that when April 15th rolls around again.

Also, a safe deposit box (either at a bank or in your home) is the safest place to hold important documents: birth certificates, marriage license, property deeds, military discharge papers, wills, power of attorney, or other legal agreement. Knowing where the key to the box is

located helps ease the situation at an otherwise difficult time.

While your spouse or companion is still living, take the necessary time to discuss your overall financial situation. At a minimum, learn what your monthly income and expenses are. Remember to include the quarterly estimated taxes, property taxes and your insurance premiums in your projections as these are usually large expenses needing advanced planning.

Do you have a bookkeeping system in place already? Some method that tells you how your actual budget compares with your projected budget? Income and expenses can be recorded either on the computer or in a commercial type of financial journal, sold at places like WalMart or Staples. There's no right or wrong way to do this but it does need to be a system that works well for your purposes.

Anyone needing assistance in check writing, balancing of bank statements or bookkeeping might want to contact SMAA about their Money Minders Program. Before my husband passed away, he had volunteered to help others through this Program and found great satisfaction in helping others understand their financial picture.

Do you have some professional advisors already—perhaps a lawyer, an accountant, an insurance agent, a tax consultant, a financial advisor? Or, do you need to find someone in these categories? Based solely on my own experience, I would highly recommend working with a financial consultant who is also a certified financial planner (CFP). This should also be someone you are comfortable working with as he/she will be managing all of your savings and investments. One way or the other now is the time to meet with an advisor together as a couple and discuss your present situation. Many professionals will agree to an "out of office" appointment if it's really necessary. Keep contact information handy so you can reach your advisors quickly in an emergency.

Shortly after Jack's death, I was surprised to hear that the state had put a lien on my property, something routinely done to make sure that no further taxes are owed. A lawyer will need to be contacted to remove the lien. You'll need to provide the lawyer with the following information: a complete list of all your assets since the actual date of death, along with a market appraisal of your home, done by a real estate agent. Having saved all of your banking and investment statements for the year will make this project a lot easier for you and the lawyer.

Some ideas about managing your home will be presented in another column.

Carole can be contacted at CaroleWelch5@gmail.com.

Sustaining Our Vim and Vigor this Winter

Susan Gay, Registered Dietician
Nutrition Coordinator, Hannaford

Recently our group of Hannaford dietitians was discussing the topic of eating for energy.



Tried and true, the key elements centered around getting a variety of nourishing foods, maintaining a regularly scheduled eating pattern, adequate hydration, and physical activity.

First, including nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables in every meal and snack will allow us to get the vitamins (like Vitamin B6) and minerals (like iron) necessary to keep our bodies running efficiently. Especially important this time of year, fruits and vegetables can supply antioxidants and phytochemicals to give our immune system just the boost it needs! After all, who has time to catch a cold?

More variety in foods can provide more nutrients. Rather than having just an orange for snack, pair up a fruit with a lean protein and enjoy a satisfying snack to support muscle and maximum endurance! Lean protein includes lean meat, fish, beans/lentils, nuts/nut butters, low-fat milk/dairy and eggs. As an added bonus, fiber from dark leafy vegetables, root vegetable skins—like carrots and apples—can help improve symptoms of bowel irregularity that can slow folks down.

Second, going too long without eating can cause feelings of fatigue as a result of hunger. And consequently cause the "crash" from overeating at the next meal. Five small meals opposed to three big meals promote steady energy throughout the day by minimizing blood sugar fluctuations. Furthermore, smaller meals may also help you breathe easier! If the stomach becomes too full it can occupy the space between it and the lungs therefore prevent full expansion of the lungs to take in adequate oxygen. Examples of small meals include: a half sandwich made with one slice of whole grain bread and 1 oz protein with 4 oz of vegetable soup; 1/4-1/2 cup cottage cheese with 1/2 cup fresh pineapple; one egg, a 4oz yogurt and a small clementine, or 2-3 tablespoons of hummus or guacamole with a serving of whole grain crackers and a small glass of milk.

Third, drink up! Hydration is often overlooked in the colder months. Dehydration can diminish our energy. Six cups of water, decaf tea works too, can improve our sense of wellbeing on a day-to-day basis!

And lastly, if there are reasons for avoiding exercise, such as pain or shortness of breath, talk with your physician to see what can be done to incorporate more safe (and fun!) physical activity. Have a happy winter!



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From Jo Dill's Notebook

What's New?

Maine Senior Games

2011 marks our 25th Year! I am in the process of planning some great fun for each event, and I am looking for volunteers to help work on searching the past so we can have a display of our history at each event. I have materials here but is there anyone out there who has participated in all 24 years? 20 years? Let me know at jdill@smaaa.org.

The 2011 schedule (August 6-September 25) is almost complete except for one event. Here are some of the changes:

Swimming: One day event on a Saturday

Horseshoes and Golf: August
Tennis: Moving indoors to the Racquet and Fitness Center, Portland

Triathlon: New location

Track & Field: Afternoon event

National Competition

The 2011 National Senior Games will be held in Houston, Texas from June 16-30. All of the results from Maine have been turned in to Nationals but it is a long process and once my results are in they go through another level and eventually to the data base. If you haven't heard from them about participating in Texas you should shortly.

Advisory Board

MSG has an awesome Advisory Board that meets every five weeks to discuss strategies, marketing, development, athletes, volunteers and other pertinent information. Our board consists of staff from our sponsoring organization, the Southern Maine Agency, including Peg Brown, Ted Trainer and Eileen Whynot. Community members include, Janet Hoskin (Director of Community Services in Cape Elizabeth), Ginny Ketch

(Event Sponsor, Piper Shores), Jerry LeVasseur (Athlete/National Senior Games Board Member), Joe Miller (SMAA Board Member), Mary Ann Malloy (Athlete/Healthy Body Fit Mind), Robin Rutherford (Lead Sponsor, Martin's Point), Deb Smith (Athlete/Not Too Late Basketball Camp) and Kim Williams (Athlete/Unum).

Save the Date!

On Sunday June 5th Maine Senior Games and Easy Adventures will host an "Explore Maine Senior Games" day at Scarborough High School. This event will be similar to the 2010 Explore Track and Field Day except that we will be offering more sports. So far we have horseshoes, track and field, foul shooting and hot shot. Other sports will be added as time goes on. This will be your chance to learn a new event, get new tips on your event, learn about the Maine Senior Games and what it has to offer, rules, handouts and much more! This will be an event not-to-miss.

Opening Ceremonies

This year the Maine Senior Games opening ceremonies will be on Sunday, July 31st at a Portland Sea Dogs Baseball Game. The game starts at 1PM and the Sea Dogs play The Altoona Curve (Pirates). Athletes and supporters will get to go on the field before the game and the torch will be lit to open The Maine Senior Games! Athletes will carry our banner and signs naming all the sports. We also get to throw out the first pitch!

Tickets can be purchased by calling Jo Dill at 396-6519 or by emailing jdill@smaaa.org. The seats are reserved behind home plate and cost \$7. Join in on the fun and help raise awareness for Maine Senior Games.

How About Giving "Senior News" a Boost?

Our appeal for donations to help pay for "Senior News" yielded \$365 in November and December. Thank you to those who contributed! If you haven't given, consider donating \$10 a year to help with the cost of producing, printing and delivering the paper.

Since 1997 Maine's only newspaper devoted to the daily life of older adults and their families has been produced, mailed and distributed from Brunswick to Kittery and as far west as Bridgton free of charge. We also mail to anyone anywhere by request. The good news: "Senior News" will continue! A recent public opinion poll* of 300 people age 55 or older found that 74% recognize the value of such a newspaper and 35% specifically identified "Senior News."

This is good news for our faithful advertisers who make the "Senior News" possible. Yet, costs have crept up over the years, especially postage over which we have no control, and we can use a financial boost.

If you enjoy the "Senior News" and are able to donate to help keep the paper thriving, please send a suggested donation of \$10 per year. By supporting "Senior News" you will help keep the information and resources communicated in our pages available to more than 20,000 households!

If you don't receive "Senior News" in the mail, call Bonnie Craig at 207-396-6526 or 1-800-427-7411, x526 and leave your name and mailing address. We're happy to send your way!

*Research conducted by Critical Insights, Portland, ME.E.

Yes, I would like to support "Senior News" with a donation.

Name: _____

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VOLUNTEER CONNECTIONS RSVP

"An Invitation to Make a Difference"

People Age 55 and Older Have Additional Opportunities to Help Through RSVP

Southern Maine Agency on Aging is the sponsor of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Cumberland and York counties. RSVP is a national program for people age 55 and over who want to serve their communities by volunteering. In RSVP, you may help seniors in any of the ways listed below, but you also have many additional volunteer opportunities with other nonprofit and healthcare organizations. For opportunities in Cumberland County contact Priscilla Greene at 396-6521 or 1-800-427-7411 Ext. 521. Or, email her at pgreene@smaa.org. For opportunities in southern York County contact Deborah Levine at 603-205-4073 or email her at dlevine12@yahoo.com. For opportunities in the rest of York County contact Ken Murray at 396-6520 or 1-800-427-7411 Ext. 520. Or, email him at kmurray@smaa.org.

The Tip of the Iceberg

There are hundreds of volunteer opportunities available for people age 55 and over through RSVP. The ones listed below are just "the tip of the iceberg."

Cumberland County

- A mentor program awaits your consideration. Become a friend to a youth age 13 to 17. You are matched with someone who would share your interests. Training and support are available.
- The Red Cross needs you! A variety of opportunities to choose from.
- How about spending some time with babies who need rocking and bottle feeding. A day care center in the Cumberland, Falmouth and Yarmouth area would welcome your help.
- The Trauma Intervention Program is a program where a volunteer would offer emotional and practical support to victims of a trauma. This support would occur in the first few hours following a traumatic event. Training is given by this very well-respected

organization.

- The time is here to train to become a volunteer tax preparer. Other opportunities with the AARP Tax Aide Program include being a scheduler or a greeter.
- Consider being a recruiter to help a nonprofit agency find volunteers. You will be trained by the United Way to carry out this important work.

For in-depth information on the above and many additional ideas, call Priscilla Greene at 396-6521 or 1-800-427-7411, Ext. 521. Or, you may email her at pgreene@smaa.org.

York County

- A nursing home in the Saco area is looking for someone to play the piano for residents on Tuesdays.
- Goodwill of Northern New England is starting a mentoring program called Goodwill GoodGuides. Call to learn more.
- York County's domestic violence response program needs hotline advocates, kid workers and court monitors.
- The time is here to train to become a volunteer tax preparer. Other opportunities with the AARP Tax Aide Program include being a scheduler or a greeter.
- Consider being a recruiter to help a nonprofit agency find volunteers. You will be trained by the United Way to carry out this important work.
- Learn how you can support independent living for frail elders and veterans returning from recent conflicts. Call to learn more.

To learn more about these and many other volunteer opportunities contact Ken Murray, at 1-800-427-7411, Extension 520 or by e-mailing kmurray@smaa.org.

There are Lots of Ways for You to Help

Here are some of the many ways that volunteers of a variety of ages can help Southern Maine Agency on Aging meet its mission. Maybe there is an opportunity here for you! Contact us to learn more! Call Ken Murray at 396-6520 or 1-800-427-7411, Ext. 520 or email kmurray@smaa.org.

- Help seniors with everyday finances as a bill-paying assistant
- Deliver Meals on Wheels
- Shop for groceries for an older adult
- Lead a group to help older adults improve their balance
- Lead a group to help people cope with health issues
- Help organize Maine Senior Games
- Support residents of Larrabee Village in Westbrook by leading activities, visiting or grocery shopping
- Help with activities and events at Truslow Adult Day Health Center in Saco
- Become a Medicare and Health Insurance Advocate
- Help provide information and resources
- Put your office skills to good use at SMAA

New RSVP Stations

The following organization recently became an RSVP volunteer station. We welcome them to the RSVP network and look forward to working with them to develop meaningful volunteer assignments for many years to come.

Goodwill Industries of Northern New England
 Lucid Stage
 Maine Medical Center Elder Life Program
 United Way of Greater Portland

55+? Time to right-size?



Opening Summer 2011 – Spring Crossing, Westbrook

Opening early next summer in downtown Westbrook—on the River Walk, near everything—brand new, one and two person apartments in 24-hour maintained, smoke-free building. Community space, on-site laundry, and assigned off-street parking. Your cat will be welcome.

Reasonable rents include utilities:

- \$678-\$814 for one-bedroom
- \$815-\$978 for two-bedrooms

Income limits: \$25,700-\$35,220

We can send you details when they become available if you add your name to the Spring Crossing interest list: 207-854-9779, 207-854-6856, or dgallagher@westbrookhousing.org



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John H. Dorsey, DPM
 Christopher Pingitore, DPM
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At some point in almost everyone's life, even essential needs such as basic foot services (nail cutting and callous care) may require assistance. Certain medical conditions, e.g., poor circulation, diabetes, arthritis and neurologic conditions, may affect one's ability to heal properly or feel minor injury, a risk to providing self-care safely. A thorough evaluation to determine your specific foot or ankle problem and explanation of treatment is approved by practically all insurance plans, and usually even basic foot care services for at-risk patients are approved by health insurance. If you have a foot condition and need help, call us for an evaluation. Let us help you understand your medical insurance benefits and relieve you of the risk of self-care.

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New Volunteers

The following volunteers recently joined RSVP. Welcome to you all, and thank you for sharing your gifts with others through volunteering.

Starr Bartlett
Philip Benner
Bonnie Broad
Richard Bryant
Peter Carlino
Nancy Carlson
Lindsay Copeland
Marcia Deal
Susan DeQuattro
Victor G. Drew, Jr.
George J. Fecteau
Lynne Gass
Dale Huot
Diana Crader Johnson
Carole Kainlor
Robert Leonard
Charlotte Olson
Steven Piker
Becki Thomas
Sharon Tobey

RSVP Volunteer Recruiters Needed!

Are you 55 or older?

Are you outgoing and personable?

Do you know your community well?

WE NEED YOU!

United Way of York County, United Way of Greater Portland and the Southern Maine Agency on Aging are collaborating to help area nonprofits with their volunteer recruitment efforts. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is currently seeking volunteers who are 55 and older to work with nonprofits in York & Cumberland counties to find excited volunteers to help support their causes. The Volunteer Recruiters will work closely with their local United Way to help nonprofits find the right volunteers to work in their organization.

If you are interested in finding out more information, please contact Ken Murray at (207) 396-6520 or 1-800-427-7411 or e-mail him at kmurray@smaaa.org

No Such Thing as "Just a Volunteer"

By Robert Quigley
RSVP and SMAA Volunteer

Might you be her son she asked
Each week I see you here
Oh no, I'm not her son I said
I'm just a volunteer

"Just a volunteer" she said
As I turned to walk away.
I wonder if you'd have the time
For something I'd like to say

Do you know how much she waits
For the day that you arrive.
How she listens for your voice
Her senses more alive.

Do you know she checks her watch
Many times before
You arrive to visit her
And enter through her door

Do you know she speaks of you
When you are not there
And tells us stories you have told
Tales she likes to share

Do you see the smile she gives
To you when you are here
How she loves to hold your hand
Your presence is so dear

Do you know you're in her prayers
That she says every night
A prayer to keep you safe from harm
When you are out of sight

Do you know how much you mean to her
The difference that you make
By chasing boredom from her hours
And her loneliness forsake

These are gifts you give to her
Every time you're here
And that is why there's no such thing
As "Just a volunteer"

*"Just got the Nov-Dec issue. What a great paper! Thanks so much."
— Dave M.*

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MEDICARE

An Update on New Health Laws

Death Panels were Scary Rumors

A portion of this editorial appeared in the Nov/Dec issue. Here it is in its entirety.

Remember the rumors about “death panels” in 2009? There never was any provision in the health care reform legislation

that would “pull the plug on Grandma,” but the opposition was relentless and even today about 36% of seniors still believe that the Affordable Care Act created death panels (according to a poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation, July 2010).



There was, however, a minor provision in the proposed law that would have paid for VOLUNTARY consultations between doctors and their Medicare patients about end-of-life issues like living wills, hospice care, etc.

Because of the propaganda about death panels, Congress scrapped that provision.

Too bad. Medicare patients are the losers because of those lies. On the other hand, the new health care law does address a peculiar deficiency in coverage for those who need hospice care. Hospice benefits can provide crucial support for both patients and families during a very difficult time—some research indicates this care may extend the patient’s life—and surely the quality at the end of their life.

Under current rules, beneficiaries whose doctors determine that they have less than six months to live can choose hospice care—but get this: only if they forgo any further life-prolonging treatment! The new law establishes a three-year “concurrent care” demonstration at 15 sites nationwide in which Medicare would cover both kinds of treatment simultaneously. These sites should be up and running by 2012. Experts anticipate that these demonstrations will prove remarkably successful, and that Medicare will change the hospice rules accordingly. Let’s hope so.

**Stan Cohen, Bridgton, Maine
 Volunteer Medicare Advocate
 Outgoing Board Chair
 Southern Maine Agency
 on Aging**

Stan is available for one-on-one assistance with Medicare and health insurance through the Bridgton Community Center at 647-3116 for an appointment—or show up at Bridgton Hospital on Tuesday mornings between 8:30 and 11:00.

Medicare and the Affordable Care Act

What changes will the Affordable Care Act bring to Medicare beneficiaries in 2011 and later? There are many and they are described in the book: “Medicare & You” for 2011. Here are some of the more important changes:

- For those who reach the Part D “doughnut hole” in 2011 there will be a 50% discount on brand-name prescriptions. Each year thereafter the discount will increase until, by 2020, there will be no gap in coverage. Generic drugs will also be subject to discounts during the “doughnut hole.”
- In 2014, the Act will reduce the out-of-pocket amount that qualifies for catastrophic coverage in Part D.
- The Act restructures payments to Medicare Advantage (MA) plans by setting payments to different percentages of Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) rates. In addition, in 2014 Medicare Advantage companies will be required to spend no more than 15% of their revenue on profit and advertising. That should work to help provide more services to beneficiaries.
- The Act prohibits Medicare Advantage plans from imposing higher cost-sharing for some covered benefits than what is required under Traditional Medicare.
- Many preventive services, like diabetes screenings and mammograms, for which there have been co-pays, will now be covered 100% by Medicare.
- The Affordable Care Act has provisions to improve the quality of care people with Medicare receive. For example, hospitals will receive incentives to improve patient care after discharge to prevent unnecessary readmissions, and doctors will be encouraged to coordinate care that their patients receive from different specialists. Primary Care Physicians in health professional shortage areas will be awarded a 10% bonus by meeting certain standards for their Medicare patients.
- Starting in 2011—in addition to the “Welcome to Medicare” free physical—beneficiaries will be entitled to a free annual checkup with their primary care physician.
- The savings through reducing Medicare fraud, and reduced subsidies for Medicare Advantage insurers, along with other measures, is estimated to add at least 12 years of funding to the Medicare Trust Fund.

**Stan Cohen, Bridgton, Maine
 SMAA Volunteer
 Medicare Advocate**



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❖ 3,130 people improved their health with foot care, screenings and tests

❖ 25,000 people were vaccinated as a step toward flu prevention

❖ 715 people lived safely with Lifeline Emergency Response Services

❖ 150 volunteers donated 12,000 hours to the community


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When is it Time to Move to Senior Housing?

By Christine Kukka

Is routine maintenance, climbing stairs, or digging out after a blizzard overwhelming? Are your housing costs too high? Could you use some new friends and social activities? These are some of the issues seniors face when deciding to make a move. While change can be challenging, these questions can help you decide if it's time to move and what type of housing you need.

What will you need in two to three years to live happily and comfortably?

Think beyond bathroom grab bars. Do you have medical issues that may eventually limit walking, house cleaning or driving? Will you need a home that accommodates a walker or wheelchair? Or, will you just need help with maintenance and shoveling?

Will you be driving two years from now?

If yes, you may need "independent living" apartments that feature garages, maintenance, snow removal and some community activities. If no, you may want housing on a public bus line or within walking distance of stores. Non-drivers may also need a community that provides

tenants with regular transportation to stores and social events.

Do you cook?

If you struggle to cook and maintain a healthy diet, it may be time to move to a community that provides daily meals. This does not have to be assisted living. For example, Westbrook Housing's Larrabee Village provides optional breakfast and lunch daily for tenants. If food shopping and cooking are a big obstacle, sign up for Meals on Wheels—that's why meals are delivered!

Do you need more social interaction?

With age, we can become isolated without work or children to connect us to our communities. Senior housing provides easy ways to meet others and to participate in social activities that don't require nighttime driving. Even independent developments sponsor barbecues, trips and entertainment.

Do you want 24/7 assistance?

If you function well, can manage your medications, but want someone available 24/7 in the event of an emergency, you may need a community that provides easily accessible, around-the-clock resident attendants and maintenance support.

How much can you pay for housing?

There are a wide array of for-profit senior developments with rents that include extra services and support. There are also non-profit organizations and municipal housing authorities that offer both market-rate, independent senior apartments as well as subsidized communities that offer lower rents to seniors making less than \$35,000 a year.

Monthly rents at subsidized properties, which include utilities, range from 30 percent of your monthly income up to \$526-\$678 for a one-bedroom apartment to \$790-\$949 for two-bedrooms.

For more information about senior housing options through Westbrook Housing, call 854-9779 or email dgallagher@westbrook-housing.org.



Residents of Westbrook Housing on a fall foliage tour.



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