

Summer 2004

Silverwire Newsletter

Lenard W. Kaye

University of Maine, len.kaye@maine.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/moca_education



Part of the [Gerontology Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Kaye, Lenard W., "Silverwire Newsletter" (2004). *Maine Center on Aging Education and Training*. 6.
https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/moca_education/6

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Center on Aging Education and Training by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

Silverwire

Vol. 2, No. 3 Summer 2004

NEWSLETTER OF THE UMAINE CENTER ON AGING

The Center on Aging Wins Grant to Study Elder Abuse

The abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of Maine's older adults is a problem created and continued in silence. As many as 12,000 older Maine citizens experience a form of abuse annually. More than three quarters of older victims will not tell anyone about what is happening to them.



Unfortunately, family members, most often adult children, spouses, and grandchildren, perpetrate more than two thirds of all elder abuse crimes. Frequently, the abuser is dependent on the older adult for their support. Many abusers also have alcohol and substance abuse disorders. Elders who are more socially isolated may experience a greater risk of being abused. Many times the abuse continues as a life-long pattern of domestic violence.

The University of Maine Center on Aging's new Maine Partners for Elder Protection (MePEP) project, funded by a \$200,000 two year grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation, is designed to identify and support older adults experiencing or at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The project reaches out to at risk elders through a unique and trusted source—their primary care physician's office.

This project forges an innovative partnership among rural primary care practices in Penobscot and Piscataquis counties, the Eastern Agency on Aging, the University of Maine Center on Aging, and elder abuse community advocates. Participating primary care practices include Norumbega Medical Specialists, Ltd., an Eastern Maine Health Care affiliate, as well as Dover-Foxcroft Family Medicine, Dover Family Practice, Miliken Medical Center, and the Penobscot Community Health Center, members of the Maine Health Alliance.

The project will provide a trained elder care specialist from the Eastern Agency on Aging to respond to the individual's needs with customized counseling, resources, and referral to services. The specialist will also be an advocate available to help the older adult navigate Maine's protective service system as needed. The Center on Aging will be gathering data on the project and providing an educational "Lunch and Learn" series about elder abuse to area health care practitioners.

Unfortunately, many attribute elder abuse risk factors to caregiver stress, personal traits of the victim, or the elder's own cognitive or physical impairment. This is simply not true. Elder abuse is a crime perpetrated to gain power and

control over another person.

There are number of actions we can all take to help fight elder abuse in our communities. Start by asking older friends and relatives if they have the support they need to feel safe in their life.

The Bureau of Elder and Adult Services Adult Protective Services unit investigates reports of abuse of dependent and incapacitated adults. Simply call (nationwide 24-hours), toll-free to 1-800-624-8404.

[Continued on page 5...](#)



HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE:

- RSVP begins
"Bone Builders" program3**
- Student research
highlights aging4**
- Public forum focuses on
parenting relatives4**
- Life long learning studied6**
- Senior \$ense launches
website7**

Silverwire

Vol. 2., No. 3

Summer 2004

Lenard W. Kaye, Director

Leah Ruffin, Editor

Silverwire is published three times a year, in the Fall/Winter, Spring, and Summer.

The Center on Aging is an interdisciplinary research center associated with the University of Maine's School of Social Work and the College of Business, Public Policy, and Health. Our mission is to promote and facilitate activities on aging in the areas of education, research and evaluation, and community service, in order to maximize the quality of life of older citizens and their families in Maine and beyond.

Center on Aging

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

5723 Donald P. Corbett Business Building

Orono, Maine 04469-5723

Tel: (207) 581-3444

Fax: (207) 581-4490

E-mail: info@mainecenteronaging.org

www.mainecenteronaging.org

©2004 University of Maine

Center on Aging

Founding Board of Advisors

Mary Cathcart

Edwin N. Clift

Arthur Comstock

Roberta E. Downey

Madeleine Freeman

John Mahon

Alvin S. McNeilly

Leonard E. Minsky

Clifford Rosen

Don Sharland

Center on Aging Staff

Lenard W. Kaye, Director

Robin Arnold, Center Coordinator

Jane Harris Bartley, Director, RSVP

Paula Burnett, Coordinator, RSVP

Sandra S. Butler, Resident Scholar

Jennifer Crittenden, Graduate Research

Assistant

Muffy Eastman, Support Group

Co-Leader

Marjie Harris, Support Group

Co-Leader

Amy LaBonte, Workstudy Student

Chevelle Marshall, Coordinator, RSVP

Andrew Matlins, Director, Senior Sense

Kristin Nadeau, Research Associate

Leah Ruffin, Senior Research Associate

Desiree Scott, AmericaCorps *VISTA

Win Turner, Research Analyst

Barbara Urquhart, SCSEP Trainee

Nancy M. Webster, Training Specialist

From the Director

I continue to be amazed by the extent to which folks in Maine are able to "play so well with each other." In a state where economic resources are as scarce as they are, the willingness of key stakeholders to speak with a single voice is all the more crucial. And, I am convinced that the ability of Maine's human service professionals to partner is second to none. Maine's collaborative philosophy shines through in so many ways. Consider the following cases in point:

1) With the goal of creating a system of human services that is cost effective and responsive to consumers, Governor Baldacci's reorganization of Maine's Dept. of Human Services and Dept. of Behavioral and Developmental Services represented an impressive coming together of hundreds of key stakeholders from around the state. A vast array of perspectives were ultimately considered and certainly helped to legitimate and make as thoughtful and open as possible a daunting organizational challenge.

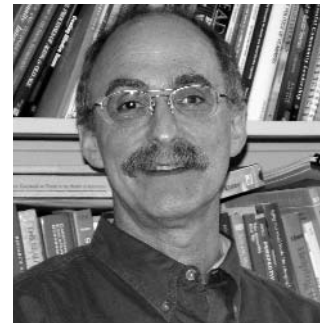
2) Maine's Aging/Disability Resource Centers Project, a federally-funded initiative administered through Maine's Bureau of Elder and Adult Services has enabled an extremely broad-based and committed network of long-term care service planners and providers to come together in three Maine communities to develop strategies for improving and making less complex access to publicly-funded programs. The Bangor coalition, like those in Bath/Brunswick and Farmington, is demonstrating that diverse community organizations can communicate constructively and agree to better coordinate intake processes, leveraging local resources, and testing public information approaches for individuals who may not qualify for publicly-funded programs.

3) The Eastern Maine Transportation Collaborative (EMTC) is tackling one of the most perplexing challenging facing rural America --- regional transportation and access to health care among the elderly population. No less than 15 hospitals, transportation services, Area Agencies on Aging, Community Action Programs, Departments of Transportation, and academic centers on aging have come together to think creatively about the issue. The EMTC is focusing especially on issues surrounding older adult access to non-emergency care for chronic disease.

The three examples cited above have clear commonalities. In each case, working side-by-side are academe and community, public, private, and not-for-profits, and special interests groups throughout the human services. Discussion is lively yet respectful. Ideas are innovative and have pushed the planning envelope repeatedly.

Noteworthy as well is the prominent role that certain organizations have readily assumed as facilitators. An excellent example is the United Way of Eastern Maine, which is the prime facilitating body driving the Aging/Disability Resource Centers Project demonstration in Bangor and the Eastern Maine Transportation Collaborative. The United Way takes seriously its mission of improving the lives of people in Eastern Maine by mobilizing the caring power of people and communities. Its role as a catalyst for partnership-building deserves recognition.

Maine has not cornered the market on collaborative community projects. Examples abound elsewhere in the country. Yet, since coming to Maine I have come to believe that we do it particularly well. I think it is not unrelated to our rural heritage and community loyalty. The perspective in rural communities seems to be that we are all in it together and that nothing is impossible. Somehow, someday, we will get it done. In an age of budget cuts and downsizing such spirit is certainly revitalizing.



Lenard W. Kaye

RSVP Launches "Bone Builders" Exercise Program

The Hammond Street Senior Center (HSSC) and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) serving Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington counties have collaborated to bring "Bone Builders", a community-based osteoporosis prevention education and exercise program, to HSSC members in July 2004.

The exercise regimen is based on the book "Strong Women Stay Young", published by Tufts University researcher Dr. Miriam Nelson, PhD. Research published in the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association showed conclusively that seniors who participated in strength training twice weekly for a year significantly increased their bone density.

RSVP Director Jane Harris-Bartley traveled to Vermont to see first-hand the success of this program. According to an RSVP Director in Rutland, Vermont, "our program in Vermont took off like wild fire - we knew this type of exercise and education program was needed but didn't realize just how successful it would be." Harris-Bartley returned to Maine full of enthusiasm and determination to bring this effective program to as many older citizens as possible by collaborating with community agencies, groups, and organizations.

Cost is not a barrier to participation in Bone Builders. Because the program utilizes RSVP volunteer instructors and donated sites, RSVP is able to deliver the program at no cost to older adults looking for an exercise program relevant to osteoporosis prevention and education.

The major cost to implement this program is the purchasing of weight-lifting equipment, miscellaneous materials and supplies for the classes, and train-the-trainer workshops required to train RSVP volunteers to lead classes. According to Harris-Bartley, "we hope to cover these costs by grants and donations and are committed to a no cost to participant motto." RSVP is actively seeking funding to purchase additional weights for future collaborations and classes.

Future plans for collaboration and expansion include the Bangor-Brewer YWCA, and the YWCA and The Women's Collective of Mount Desert Island. In addition, RSVP Directors across Maine are underway with plans to bring this program to their service areas. For more information on RSVP or its Bone Builders program, please contact Jane Harris-Bartley at 581-4418 or Paula Burnett at 581-4412.



Louise M. Bonawitz, Hammond Street Senior Center, demonstrates a "Bone Builders" technique.

Ms. Bonawitz is the fitness center manager at the HSSC. She will train RSVP and community volunteers to lead future "Bone Builders" groups.

Maine's First Lady to Speak at Volunteer Reception

The second annual volunteer appreciation luncheon for RSVP members will be held on September 22 from 11:30am - 2:00pm at the Spectacular Event Center in Bangor. The event will recognize volunteers with 20, 15, 10, and 5 years of service.

Guest speaker Karen Baldacci will open the luncheon, followed by buffet, entertainment, and door prizes. This year's theme is "Hats off to Volunteers."

RSVP currently has over 500 volunteers and 100 sites in Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Washington Counties. Since January of this year, RSVP volunteers have served over 30,000 hours.

FORUM SHARES CHALLENGES OF PARENTING AS AN OLDER RELATIVE

The Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) held its first public forum on March 26, 2004 in Augusta.

Approximately 150 grandparents,



The resource fair attendees network and gather information.

policy makers, service providers, and the media attended the event, which highlighted the needs of relatives caring for children of family members. Mary Bissell, Senior Fellow with the New America Foundation, moderated the event.

The Forum was sponsored by the UMCoA, Family Connections, Generations United and 13 co-sponsors, including Maine's Bureau of Health, the Bureau of Child and Family Services, the Bureau of Elder and Adult Services, Eastern Agency on Aging, and the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine.

Family Connections is a joint project of the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM) and Families and Children Together (FACT).



Parenting relatives speak about their experiences at the Forum.

Family Connections offers a kinship care warm-line for support, information, and referral services (1-866-298-0896), an extensive library, kinship care support groups around the state, and assistance in navigating social service systems and managing children with special needs.

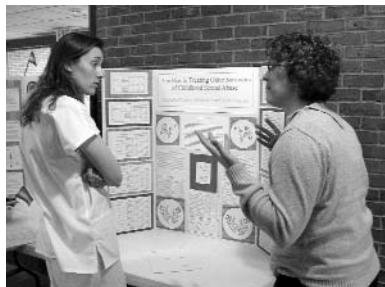
AGING RESEARCH SHOWCASED BY STUDENT GRANT WINNERS

Three student proposals were accepted by the Center on Aging as the 2004 Hartford Gero-Rich Mini Grant winners.

The student projects, each highlighting different aspects of aging and social work practice, were displayed at the University of Maine Graduate Research Exposition held in May.

"Volunteer Caregiver Respite" authored by Carol Solinger, Daryne Sandford, Judy Anderson, and Christine Martel was also presented for display at the 14th Annual Rural Geriatric Conference, held June 3-5 in Bar Harbor, Maine.

Congratulations to all the student winners!



Above: Karen Martin (right) explains "Age Bias in Diagnosing PTSD."

The study examines age discrimination in the treatment of trauma survivors. Not shown: Michelle Dionne and Matt Lord.



Corey Walmer displays "Physician Hospice Utilization Survey: Franklin County, ME."

Findings highlight physician perceptions of hospice benefits and barriers to use. Not shown: Roberta Heald.



Left: Carol Solinger and Daryne Sandford present "Volunteer Caregiver Respite."

The project studies the difference between rural and urban caregiver perception and need for volunteer respite. Not shown: Judy Anderson and Christine Martel.

COA SCHOLAR ACCEPTED TO INSTITUTE ON AGING & SOCIAL WORK

Sandra Butler, PhD, Center on Aging resident scholar, has been accepted to participate in the Institute on Aging and Social Work held at the College of St. Scholastica during the summer of 2004. Dr. Butler is one of fifteen nationwide applicants chosen to attend the prestigious institute, which is supported by a grant from the National Institute on Aging. The institute provides advanced training in aging research to social work faculty. Participants will have the opportunity to network with distinguished visiting professors and National Institute on Aging staff, develop a research proposal, and investigate strategies to incorporate aging research at their home university.

MAINE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY SEEKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The newly revitalized Maine Gerontological Society is currently seeking members-at-large who are interested in volunteering to participate in a variety of committees. Standing committees include membership services/publicity, education, finance/awards, and legislative affairs. Volunteers are also sought to work on the society's first conference, to be held in February of 2005. For more information please contact Lenard Kaye, UMaine Center on Aging, at 581-3483 or len.kaye@umit.maine.edu.

GRANT (continued from cover)..

Encourage loved ones to call "Check It Out", a toll-free number sponsored by the Area Agencies on Aging, Legal Services for the Elderly, and the TRIAD, to check on financial offers that seem too good to be true. (1-877-ELDERS-1 or 1-877-353-3771). Get a conversation going in your community locations-your place of worship, favorite gathering spot, local service groups.

Together, we can help the voices of our state's older adults be heard.



RSVP welcomes new staff.
From left: Chevelle Marshall, Jane Harris-Bartley, Paula Burnett.

Chevelle Marshall, Program Coordinator for RSVP, comes to the program with a varied background, including national service, community capacity building, non-profit program support, and education. She served as a Communities for Children and Youth AmeriCorps*VISTA as well as an AmeriCorps*VISTA team leader at the United Way of Eastern Maine. Chevelle holds a degree in paralegal studies.

AMERICORPS*VISTA SENIOR \$ENSE MEMBER : PHILIP DOERR

by Barbara Urquhart
SCSEP Trainee

Philip Doer, Senior \$ense volunteer at the Western Maine Community Action Program, first learned about the Senior \$ense program while searching for a way to occupy his time after retirement.

Philip came to Maine with his family 17 years ago from Pennsylvania. Until retirement, he owned and operated a manufacturing company making custom wool carpets. Since his move, Franklin county has become a very special place for him.

He says the older americans in Franklin county, as well as other counties in Maine, are underserved, particularly in the areas of employment and transportation. Philip sees transportation as a barrier to employment for many

older adults. Accordingly, transportation has become a priority for Philip and his Western Maine CAP colleagues. Some of Philip's hobbies include hiking, gardening, and cooking.



AmeriCorps*VISTA Senior \$ense Program:
Western Maine Community Action
Trish Ohler and Philip Doerr

Peer Teaching in Lifelong Learning Institutes

BY E. MICHAEL BRADY, PH.D.

Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) is the name given to volunteer-based and peer-taught organizations such as the fifteen member Maine Senior College Network. Alternatively referred to as Institutes for Learning in Retirement or Learning in Retirement Institutes, there are more than 400 such programs in the United States today and countless others worldwide.

During the fall of 2002 and winter of 2003 forty-eight teaching faculty representing five programs in the Maine Senior College Network were interviewed via focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to ascertain faculty views about the experience of teaching in an LLI setting.

The first research question investigated preferred method(s) of teaching. Findings reveal that five methods are regularly used by LLI faculty: lecture,

group discussion, hands-on experiences, various "hybrids" of these three, and a course coordinator approach. A course coordinator manages details of a course without, in most cases, assuming the actual role of teacher. Hybrids were the most frequently reported method in this research sample. Faculty discussed how blending lecture, discussion, and hands-on activities maximizes flexibility and allows them to be more responsive to the needs and interests of their students.

Another research question explored how, if at all, teaching one's peers was different than other teaching experiences faculty may have had earlier in their career. One difference is that LLI students participate voluntarily. They attend classes for intrinsic reasons (e.g., the desire to learn) as compared to extrinsic reasons (e.g., to earn a credential).

Also, older students tend to be more tolerant of faculty limitations. While they expect competence, they show more patience than traditional-age students vis-à-vis their teachers' limited knowledge or other shortcomings. A third difference is that LLI students see themselves as co-learners. Related to this idea of co-learning, older students are willing to invest in developing a sense of community. In good part this feeling that one is a member of a learning community grows from the fact that teachers and students share similar ages and life experiences.

A third research question in this study examined the special challenges that present themselves to peer teachers. Five distinct challenges were reported: (1) dealing with a wide range of students' educational backgrounds; (2) subject-matter expertise among selected students in the class; (3) the overall program structure that, in most cases, allows for classes only to meet once per week over 4-8 weeks; (4) the physical changes that accompany aging and which at times create barriers to communication and learning; and (5) the mission of Lifelong Learning Institutes themselves.

A number of teachers expressed ambivalence about whether they were an "educator" or an "entertainer." A related question emerges concerning the degree to which a peer teacher can expect rigor in the educational experience if many of their students are unwilling to invest in reading, writing, or other outside-of-class activities.

In his highly acclaimed book *The Courage to Teach*, the educator and activist Parker Palmer suggests that good teaching is an act of hospitality. The hospitality expressed in Lifelong Learning Institutes, exemplified in this study by programs in the Maine Senior College Network, reflects an archetype in adult education. Lifelong Learning Institutes embrace an educational democracy wherein students and teachers share power in the classroom. While co-designing curriculum, blending teaching practices to meet student interests, and nurturing a learning community may at times lead to uncertainty, these democratic practices approach the ideal of adult education more closely than traditional teacher-centered pedagogy.



Mary Frenning, LLI educator

E. Michael Brady is Professor of Adult Education and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Southern Maine. A complete description of this research may be found in *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 29, No. 10, 2003.

Previews and Preludes.....

COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RESOURCE WEBSITE UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Beginning soon, older adults and professionals will be able to access a new website designed to provide information about aging and finances in Maine.



The website, introduced by the CoA's AmeriCorps*VISTA Senior Sense program, will allow users to search for the resources, tips, and tools needed to become savvy consumers of financial information.

Patrons will also be able to find the agencies and programs that serve older adults closest to their home location, as well as information on employment and volunteer opportunities. Visit www.seniorsenseforme.org for more information.

COA WINS GERORICH TRAINING INITIATIVE GRANT

A \$3,000 grant award from the Institute for Geriatric Social Work of the Boston University School of Social Work will enable the Center to develop training curricula on aging issues for practicing social workers.

"*Rural Social Work and Aging: The Skills You Need to Know*", will draw on competencies outlined by the Geriatric Social Work Initiative and administered by the Council on Social Work Education/SAGE-SW.

Sessions will be offered on the Orono campus of the University of Maine, and open to social service agency personnel throughout Maine free of charge. Session topics will include: Using Research in Rural Aging; Advocacy Techniques in Rural America; and Practice Models and Intervention Skills. Session content will be incorporated into an internet accessible training module.

NEW TEXT ON AGING CHALLENGES STEREOTYPES

"*Perspectives on Productive Aging: Social Work with the New Aged*", a new publication from the NASW Press, sets out to combat views of aging as an expected period of decline and withdrawal.

Edited by Dr. Lenard Kaye, Director, University of Maine Center on Aging, the text focuses on the ability, competence, expertise, and resources that older adults bring to family and community. An extensive roster of distinguished social work practice scholars contributed to the volume.

Recommendations for social work practice within the new aging context are made while traditional social work roles and functions are challenged. The book will be available in the fall of 2004.

Make a Donation to Honor a Special Elder in Your Life

I/we want to make a gift in support of the UMaine Center on Aging and its programs in service to Maine's older adults, their families, and their communities in honor of a special person in my life.

Enclosed please find a check for \$ _____ Please charge my account for \$ _____

Card number: _____ Visa MasterCard American Express

Cardholder's signature: _____ Expiration date: _____

Cardholder's name: _____ Address: _____
(please print)

Please make this donation in honor of: _____

Please notify the following people of this donation: (include mailing address)

Return to: UMaine Center on Aging, 5723 D.P. Corbett Business Bldg., Orono, ME 04469-5723



University of Maine Center on Aging in Action



Clockwise from bottom left: The **Penobscot Valley Senior College** Board of Directors meets with Kali Lightfoot, Director, OSHER Life Long Learning Institute (second from right); **Visiting Scholar** Dr. Carol Farran (center) and University of Maine School of Nursing colleagues Therese Shipps and Nancy Fishwick; The **Center on Aging Staff**: (two smaller photos, from left) Marjie Harris, Lisa Croce, Carol Solinger, Leah Ruffin, Kristin Nadeau, Len Kaye, Drew Matlins; The directors of the **National Senior Service Corps of Maine** (standing) Susan Lavigne, Ken Murray, Jane Harris-Bartley, Susan Cheesman (CNS Program Specialist), Mona Stearns, Ruth Saint Amand (sitting) Eleanor Reese, Gary Dorman, Carla Ganiel; The **Backdoor Dance Studio's Zoot Suit Review** perform at May Festival 2004.

