

Winter 2008

## Silverwire Newsletter

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### Repository Citation

Kaye, Lenard W., "Silverwire Newsletter" (2008). *Maine Center on Aging Education and Training*. 17.

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# Silverwire

Vol. 6, No. 2 Winter 2008/2009

NEWSLETTER OF THE UMAINE CENTER ON AGING

## Portland Symposium Draws Attention to Drug Policy Issues

The International Symposium on Pharmaceuticals in the Home and Environment was held November 10-11 in South Portland. The conference represents the official venue for the 6th annual Maine Benzodiazepine Study Group conference and the 5th Annual Unused Drug Return conference. This year's symposium featured national experts on a variety of drug policy and disposal issues including the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Postal Service, as well as local keynoters from the Maine Health Access Foundation, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and others. In total, 150 attendees from as far away as New Zealand were on hand to discuss, network and share resources and experiences on those very important topics.

The two day conference featured individual presentations, symposia, and a film festival all with a focus on proper prescribing, management, and disposal of pharmaceuticals.

Lead conference organizers included the UMaine Center on Aging, the Maine Benzodiazepine Study Group, The Unused Drug Disposal Group, and the University

of New England Continuing Medical Education Division. Conference sponsors included: King Pharmaceuticals, Maine Health Access Foundation, The Bingham Group, Reckitt-Benkizer, and Purdue Pharma. Conference presentations will be posted to the conference website: [www.mainebenzo.org/2008conference.htm](http://www.mainebenzo.org/2008conference.htm) in January 2009. If you would like to be involved in conference planning for next year, please contact [info@mainecenteronaging.org](mailto:info@mainecenteronaging.org).

## Medicine Disposal Program Now Available Statewide

It is an exciting time for the Safe Medicine Disposal for ME Program, Maine's medicine mailback program for individuals and families. Over the last 7 months the program was successfully piloted within four counties in Maine at 11 pharmacy locations. Based on the success of this pilot, we have now expanded the program in two key ways. First, by the end of January 2009, envelope distribution locations will be active within all 16 counties in Maine making this a statewide program. Second, based on feedback from our

participating pharmacies, our program users, and our Advisory Board, we have opened the program up to all Maine residents regardless of age. These changes will mean that envelopes will reach those who need them most.

The Safe Medicine Disposal for ME program through the Center has received positive feedback about the program and its impact for households across Maine. The program is made possible through a grant from the U.S. EPA and the strong support of a host of state and national partners. The Center on Aging acts as the coordinating body for the program. For more information visit [www.safemeddisposal.com](http://www.safemeddisposal.com); e-mail [info@safemeddisposal.com](mailto:info@safemeddisposal.com); or call 1-866-637-9743.

See Safe Medicine Disposal for ME Program site listing on page 7

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## Silverwire

Vol. 6., No. 2

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Lenard W. Kaye, Director

Jennifer Crittenden, Editor

The Center on Aging is an interdisciplinary research center reporting to the Vice President for Research and 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.

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## From the Director

Times have become exceedingly hard both for older adults and the organizations that serve them. The consequences of a severely recessionary economy are impacting the lives of older Mainers themselves as well as many of the organizations that respond to the needs of an aging community either directly through the provision of hands-on services or indirectly through the conduct of social and health-related research and education programming. For older Mainers, the economic crisis has meant needing to carefully budget one's dwindling assets to meet the obligations of daily living. For human service organizations providing services to older adults, it has meant curtailing services and/or laying off the staff who deliver those services on a regular basis. And interdisciplinary research centers like the Center on Aging have not been immune to the far-reaching consequences of the economic downturn. Ongoing federal programs have experienced cutbacks which in turn have resulted in curtailment or flat funding of federally-supported Center on Aging projects over time. Severe state budgetary shortfalls have resulted in public agencies and local community organizations that contract with the Center having fewer resources available for conducting research and evaluation.



Lenard W. Kaye

Yet, the number and proportion of older adults in the U.S. and in Maine - one of the oldest states in our nation - continues to increase in dramatic fashion. The work of aging related service, research, and education organizations, like ours, is no less important today than it was prior to the economic downturn. In some respects, a scarce resource environment serves only to escalate the importance of discovering ways to configure and deliver services in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Unfortunately, evidence-based, cost-beneficial services will increasingly remain undocumented in the absence of an on-going aging-related research and evaluation agenda.

The Center on Aging will continue to fight to identify all available resources that allow it to deliver on its mandate of promoting and facilitating activities on aging in the areas of education, research and evaluation, and community service to maximize the quality of life of older citizens and their families. It is worth noting, that insuring the survival of a cooperative community spirit has never been more important than it is now. We must fight the impulse of becoming fixated on our own individual organizational survival, which inevitably, runs the risk of segregating organizations and institutions into separate, disparate, and potential hostile entities. We invite other organizations similarly committed to promoting older adult well-being through collaborative efforts to work with us during these challenging economic times. Together, we can and will survive the economic difficulties confronting us and the older adults we serve.

# Partnerships and Programs.....

## WIC LUNCH DISCUSSION OFFERS PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY CAREGIVING

A Women in Curriculum discussion featuring Sandy Butler, Professor in the School of Social Work; Martha A. Eastman, Care Manager, Pro Elder Consulting LLC; Renate Klein, UMaine Professor; and Martha Proulx, District Operations Manager, DHHS; part of the Women in the Curriculum and Women's Studies Program Fall 2008 Lunch Series was held on October 8, 2008.

The luncheon meeting, several in a series, hosted by WIC was opened with an overview of long term care (LTC) facts and considerations including an overview of Dr. Butler's current research on caregiver needs here in the State of Maine.

As referenced by Dr. Butler during the WIC discussion, nationally 65% of elderly individuals requiring LTC rely on family and friends for assistance rather than that of nursing home care. Additionally, 30% of these same caregivers supplement the assistance provided by them with support from paid providers. Unfortunately, 50% of the elderly in need of LTC support end up in a nursing home when family supports are not present and/or available. The value of family support and care is estimated to exceed \$257 billion annually.

In the United States alone, 34 million adults (16% of the population) provide care to family mem-

bers aged 50 and above. Females, usually daughters, account for 59%-75% of this cohort. However, men are coming forward to help in greater numbers.

Three other presenters: Martha Eastman, Renate Klein and Martha Proulx, discussed personal relationships involving caring for their individual family members.

If you are interested in learning more about the WIC lunch series, please contact the Women in the Curriculum Program at: 207-581-1228 or e-mail: [Angela.Hart@umit.maine.edu](mailto:Angela.Hart@umit.maine.edu).

## UMAINE SOCIOLOGIST TO DOCUMENT WORKPLACE HARASSMENT OF OLDER WORKERS

UMaine sociologist Amy Blackstone has received a \$125,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to fund a two-year study of workplace harassment of older workers in Maine. Conventional thinking may associate workplace harassment with younger or culturally different demographic groups, but given the state's aging workforce, Blackstone says now is an especially important time to become familiar with the workplace experiences of older adults. Beginning this fall, the assistant professor of sociology will survey as many as 800 Maine workers, age 62 and older,

to determine how they perceive and handle harassment at work. Blackstone hopes to find out how stature at work affects harassment experiences, and how stature at work, home and in the community may affect responses to those experiences.

By bringing together several areas of sociological inquiry, including age, power, victimization and mobilization, the study will provide new information, which could be used as the basis for modifying policies or employment laws to raise awareness about situations that may create opportunities for employee harassment or discrimination. The findings from the study will be published, and used to develop a larger-scale comparative investigation of workplace harassment over worker life cycles. It also will promote teaching, training and learning by engaging UMaine undergraduate and graduate-level research assistants, offering students experience with data collection, analysis, writing and collaboration with local agencies. If you would like to learn more about this project please contact Amy Blackstone at: 207-581-2392 or [amy.blackstone@umit.maine.edu](mailto:amy.blackstone@umit.maine.edu).



## RSVP SENIOR VOLUNTEERS LEAD WITH EXPERIENCE, WORK



The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program presented 25 Years of Service Awards recently. Shown are (from left) Helen Pennington, Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce, presenting to Ruth Dougherty; Joyce Hedlund, Eastern Maine Community College, to Emile Amnotte; and Ralph Turner, RSVP Advisory Council member, to Clara Swan. Photo by Dee Maples

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program hosted its sixth annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Oct. 22 at Jeff's Catering Banquet and Convention Center in Brewer.

The theme was "RSVP Volunteers: a Natural Treasure." RSVP members exemplify elders actively involved in responding to community needs.

Each year RSVP celebrates the accomplishments and dedication of their volunteers. Volunteers who have served 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years received Years of Service Awards. Special presentations were made to Clara Swan, Ruth Dougherty and Emile Amnotte for their 25 years of volunteer service as RSVP members.

Guest speaker at the event was Anne Schink of Project INVEST with the Maine Commission on Community Service. Clyde Folsom

served as master of ceremonies. The all-volunteer group, Dot and the Has-Beens of Millinocket, and Clayton Rogers of Brewer provided entertainment.

Approximately 300 volunteers, volunteer site supervisors and dignitaries were in attendance.

The event would not have been possible, organizers said, without the support and financial sponsorship of many local companies and organizations, including Merrill Bank, Eastern Area Agency on Aging, AARP, Bangor Savings Bank, Charlotte White Center, and the Bangor Letter Shop and Color Copy Center.

RSVP is sponsored by the University of Maine Center on Aging in Bangor. The program serves Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Washington counties.

Approximately 500 RSVP volunteers age 55 and older provide volunteer services to various nonprofit and government agencies. The average age of volunteers is 75, and in 2007 volunteers performed more than 85,000 hours of service to their communities. RSVP is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Maine State Office of Elder Services, United Way of Eastern Maine and other local funders.

Story courtesy of the Bangor Daily News

## SENIOR COLLEGE STRONG IN ITS SEVENTH YEAR

Who would guess that a class on playing the dulcimer would be so popular? Nine people signed up for the Penobscot Valley Senior College class offered in the fall of 2008, then went out and acquired Appalachian dulcimers. By the end of the first class, taught by Theresa de Vries, they were able to play a couple of songs.

A total of 243 seniors took classes in the fall, a record. They discussed the meaning of Henry James's ghost story, "The Turn of the Screw." They remembered what they were doing in the historical/political watershed year of 1968. They wrote stories and benefited from the suggestions of their peers. They listened to opera, learned how the local theater operates, gleaned ideas about finances, and gathered tips on improving their hearing.

Student evaluations for these courses, and others on the Civil War, surviving winter, science controversies, nutrition, Broadway musicals, and the English language (a total of 14 classes) were overwhelmingly positive.

Since it started in the fall of 2002, Senior College has grown and prospered as a valued part of the community. Not content to rest on its laurels, however,

[Senior College continued on page 6](#)

## RAPP PROMISING PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH RURAL GRANDFAMILIES

The University of Maine Center on Aging is developing a user-friendly and practical manual for Relatives as Parents Programs (RAPPs) working with rural grandfamilies across the country. In addition to lessons learned from implementing rural RAPP programs, it will incorporate literature about working with grandfamilies and practical information provided by both professionals and relative caregivers who participate in our research.

A survey of professionals working in agencies that serve relative caregivers is available online through December 31, 2008. All professionals that work with grandfamilies are encouraged to complete our online survey by visiting: [www.umaine.edu/](http://www.umaine.edu/)

[mainecenteronaging/RAPPexplore.htm](http://mainecenteronaging/RAPPexplore.htm). At the end of the survey, you will have the option of signing up for a follow-up interview about strategies your program (or programs that you are aware of) use to reach out to rural grandfamilies.

Although survey results are still being collected, some common themes have started to emerge.

First, there are many challenges facing programs that serve rural grandfamilies. For example:

- Finding and recruiting families can be a challenge
- Some caregivers have a lack of trust of ‘outsiders’ and ‘programs’
- Travel, including distance to services, cost of travel, and lack of transportation
- Many programs have limited financial resources and families often have significant financial needs

Professionals also recognize that the grandfamilies they work with possess many strengths. Some examples include:

- Most relative caregivers have great love for the children in their care and a strong sense of family loyalty
- Many caregivers have some type of support system, which may include family, friends, or their community

Organizations and professionals can build on these strengths when working with grandfamilies by:

- Providing incentives to caregivers for attending meetings, such as food, child care, or transportation assistance
- Networking with other agencies to develop a ‘presence’ in community
- Offering telephone, mail, e-mail, or internet-based support

Other topics to be addressed in the manual include using partnerships and collaboration, unique roles of staff, and incorporating volunteers into programming. Look for the manual in 2009!

If you would like to learn more about the manual research, please contact Jennifer Crittenden, Research Associate, at: [jennifer.crittenden@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jennifer.crittenden@umit.maine.edu) or 207-262-7923.

## SPOTLIGHT ON PRODUCTIVE AGING: TED AND JOYCE DOODY

By Lynette Roy

For Laurel “Ted,” 68, and Joyce Doody, 66, of Fort Fairfield, staying healthy and happy means staying connected to your community and most importantly, your loved ones. Ted and Joyce, who married at the young ages of 17 and 19 respectively, just celebrated their 49th year of marriage and are still going strong! Together they have four kids, 17 grandchildren and one great grandson. They both stay active together and on their own. Joyce has worked in the field of childcare for 11 years, not including raising her four children. During her free time she still loves to shop and be with her family. Ted has worked at Aroostook Medical Center for 18 years in Maintenance, a jack of all trades, but says he is now semi-retired working on an all-call basis. In his free time he enjoys carpentry work. “We enjoy doing things together, especially visiting family. We love seeing our great grandson in Bangor when we can



Joyce and Ted Doody in their Fort Fairfield home

make trip.” They attend church on Sundays and are surrounded by friends and family in the community they were both born and raised in. Their lives are a testament to the fact that you don’t have to travel too far from home to enjoy the best things in life.

## HEARING LOSS: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

BY: ANGELA LYFORD

Hearing loss affects many of us directly and indirectly throughout our lives. It is no secret that, as we age, the chance of losing your hearing increases. There are causes of hearing loss that some might not be aware of beyond aging. It is true that working or playing in areas where there is constant loud noise can cause noise-induced hearing loss, but some medications can cause hearing loss as well. These medications are called ototoxins and include certain antibiotics, large amounts of aspirin, diuretics or chemotherapy regimens. As we age, there can be age-related hearing loss which is referred to as presbycusis. It involves degeneration within the inner ear, or cochlea.

According to one study, men are more likely than women to experience hearing loss in aging, and a higher percentage of white people as well. This same study also shows a correlation between income and the likelihood of experiencing hearing loss. "People with a family income of less than \$20,000 are more than twice as likely to have hearing loss as those with a family income of \$50,000 or more", according to the National Academy on an Aging Society.

So, how do you know when to get help? Ask yourself a few simple questions. Do you hear better from ear than you do the other when you use the telephone? Do others complain because you have the volume too loud on the television? Do you sometimes not hear the telephone or doorbell? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you should speak to your physician. He or she may refer you to an audiologist for a hearing exam. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association recommends that after the age 50, you get your hearing tested every three years whether you experience symptoms of hearing loss or not.

If you have been experiencing hearing loss and are considering hearing aids, do some research. Don't expect hearing aids to "fix" your problem. Hearing aids will help you hear much like eyeglasses help you see. Seeing an audiologist for your hearing aids is the best way to be sure that you get the type of hearing aid that will work best for your unique situation. Be wary of mail order or internet vendors. They may charge a reduced price, but you run the risk of not getting the type of hearing aid you need, and you will not receive the follow up care that an audiologist can provide.

No matter the cause for your hearing loss, take heart, that this is not something shameful. Hearing loss can come from a wide variety of causes, but seeking professional help can help to reduce the effects that it will have on your day-to-day life.

References available upon request from Angela Lyford at [angela.lyford@umit.maine.edu](mailto:angela.lyford@umit.maine.edu).

### Senior College continued from page 4

PVSC has launched a long-range planning process to make improvements and to assure its viability in the future, recognizing that the aging of its leadership and members requires a steady infusion of new energy.

Stan Marshall Jr. and Dair Gillespie are heading up the long-range planning, and have set up six subcommittees to develop goals: multi-day programs (classes); special programs; organizational structure, financing, fund raising; marketing and public relations; social activities; and membership retention and service activities. It is expected that most of these goals will be implemented by June 2010.

## SAFE MEDICINE DISPOSAL FOR ME PROGRAM SITES

Free medicine disposal envelopes are available for Maine residents (individuals and families only) free of charge while supplies last:

### ~ANDROSCOGGIN~

DFD Russell Medical Centers, 180 Church Hill Rd., **Leeds**  
DFD Russell Medical Centers, 7 So. Main St., **Turner**  
CVS Pharmacy, 8 Union St., **Auburn**  
CVS Pharmacy, 10 East Ave., **Lewiston**

### ~CUMBERLAND~

CVS Pharmacy, 87 Auburn St., **Portland**  
CVS Pharmacy, 770 Roosevelt Trail, Rte 302, Shaws Plz, **Windham**  
CVS Pharmacy, 1406 Congress St., **Portland**  
CVS Pharmacy, 870 Main St., **Westbrook**  
CVS Pharmacy, 335 Ocean House Rd., **Cape Elizabeth**  
CVS Pharmacy, 199 Ocean St, **South Portland**  
CVS Pharmacy, 147 Bath Rd, Rte 24, **Brunswick**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 365 Allen Ave., **Portland**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 600 U.S. Route 1, **Scarborough**  
Martin's Point Pharmacy, 331 Veranda St., **Portland**  
Wal-Mart Pharmacy, 206 US Rt.1, **Falmouth**  
Medical Center Pharmacy, 121 Medical Center Pharmacy, Suite G500, **Brunswick**

### ~OXFORD~

**South Paris** AARP Group  
Oxford County Sheriff's Dept, 26 Western Ave., **South Paris**

### ~YORK~

York Hospital Pharmacy, 4 Dana Dr., **Berwick**  
York Hospital Apothecary, 15 Hospital Dr., **York**  
York Hospital Pharmacy, 114 Sanford Rd, **Wells**  
Kennebunk Village Pharmacy, 18 Blue Wave Professional Ctr, **Kennebunk**  
Kennebunk Police Department, 4 Summer Street, **Kennebunk**  
CVS Pharmacy, 797 Main St. Ste #D, **Sanford**  
Eliot Police Department, 27 Dixon Rd., **Eliot**  
Saco Community Pharmacy, 244 Main St., **Saco**  
York Police Department, 36 Main St., **York**

### ~AROOSTOOK~

Aroostook Wellness, 22 Birdseye Ave Ste. A, **Caribou**  
Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, 33 Davis St., **Presque Isle**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 112 Bennett Dr., **Caribou**  
Houlton Council of Catholic Women, **Houlton**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 137 North St., **Houlton**

### ~FRANKLIN~

Hannaford Pharmacy, 131 Hannaford Dr., **Farmington**

### ~HANCOCK~

**Bucksport** Community Pharmacy  
Hannaford Pharmacy, 225 High St., **Ellsworth**

### ~KENNEBEC~

Rite Aid Pharmacy, 83 Hospital St., **Augusta**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 2007 No. Belfast Ave., **Augusta**  
Rite Aid Pharmacy, 211 Main St., **Waterville**  
CVS Pharmacy, 165 Capitol St., **Augusta**  
CVS Pharmacy, 1 Kennedy Memorial Dr., **Waterville**  
Randolph Community Pharmacy, 268 Water St., **Randolph**  
DFD Russell Medical Centers, 11 Academy Rd., **Monmouth**

### ~PENOBSCOT~

Miller Drug, 210 State St., **Bangor**  
PCHC Pharmacy, 1084 Union St., **Bangor**  
Helen Hunt Health Center Pharmacy, 242 Brunswick St., **Old Town**  
Penobscot Nation Health Center Pharmacy, 23 Wabanaki Way, **Indian Island**  
Eastern Area Agency on Aging, 450 Essex St., **Bangor**  
Westgate Pharmacy, 915 Union St. Suite 7, **Bangor**  
Riverside Pharmacy, 431 State St., **Bangor**  
Airline Pharmacy, 405 N. Main St., **Brewer**  
Health Access Network, **Lincoln** (call for locations), 794-6700  
Davis Pharmacy, 59 Main St., **East Millinocket**

### ~WALDO~

Winterport Family Medicine, 775 N. Main St., **Winterport**  
Belfast Police Department, 112 Church St., **Belfast**

### ~SAGADAHOC~

CVS Pharmacy, 1 Chandler Dr, Ste 27, Bath S/C, **Bath**

\*KNOX, LINCOLN, PISCATAQUIS, SOMERSET, AND WASHINGTON SITES WILL JOIN THE PROGRAM IN MID-JANUARY 2009. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND THESE SITES VISIT: [WWW.SAFEMEDDISPOSAL.COM](http://WWW.SAFEMEDDISPOSAL.COM)





*A Member of the University of Maine System*

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5-2-11340

## **A GREYING EPIDEMIC: HIV/AIDS AND OLDER ADULTS A SPECIAL COLLOQUIUM SEPTEMBER 26, 2008**



Mark Brennan provides his keynote presentation at the September 26th colloquium. Dr. Brennan is a Senior Research Scientist at the Center on HIV and Aging, AIDS Community Research Initiative of America (ACRIA)



Dr. Sandra Butler, Professor at the UMaine School of Social Work and Dr. Brennan at the HIV/AIDS colloquium