



## From the Director's Desk

### Medicare Open Enrollment

Between October 15 and December 7 (The Annual Medicare Open Enrollment period) SMAA strongly encourages all Medicare recipients to review their Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plans for the coming calendar year. Insurers are allowed to change premiums, drug coverage, and other select benefits annually. By doing an annual review of your plan, you might be able to find better coverage, avoid pricing or coverage surprises, save money or all three. Last year, during Open Enrollment, the SMAA Medicare staff and volunteers saved clients more than \$300,000, which on average, was close to \$400 per person in annual savings! It's definitely worth the time to sit down with one of our trained Medicare specialists to compare plans and determine which Plan is the best for your needs in 2015. Please call our main office in Scarborough (207-396-6500 or toll free 1-800-427-7411) to schedule an appointment for an Open Enrollment review.



### National Falls Prevention Awareness Day

September 23, the first day of fall, marks the 6th annual National Falls Prevention Awareness Day, sponsored by the National Council on Aging (NCOA).

Falls are the leading cause of injury related emergency department visits for older adults, the major cause of hip fractures, and responsible for more than half of fatal head injuries. This year's theme, Strong Today, Falls Free Tomorrow, seeks to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members to play a part in raising awareness and preventing falls in the older adult population. For years, SMAA has been strongly involved in falls prevention through the nationally acclaimed Matter of Balance workshops that we conduct at many sites in Cumberland and York counties during the year. During the week of September 22, SMAA, working in partnership with the University of New England and MaineHealth, is sponsoring several fall risk screening events throughout southern Maine, including a session at our Scarborough office on the 22 from 1-3PM. I hope you will find time to stop in and learn more about fall prevention strategies.

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## When it was Time, the Best Friend Fund was There

By Susan DeWitt Wilder

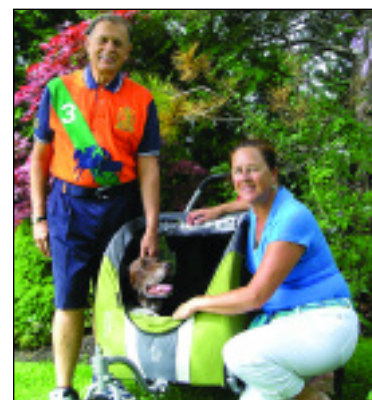
This spring Eddie Woodin and Nancy Robinson said goodbye to one of their best friends, Madison, a 15-year-old chocolate lab. Their surviving dog Morgan, also 15, has been receiving expensive chemotherapy for lymphoma. She has now lost use of her back legs and for the past eight months, Nancy has been wheeling her outside in a cart to get fresh air and see the children at the school bus stop. They'll soon have to make another difficult decision about Morgan's quality of life and whether it's time for euthanasia. Although both of their dogs have had very long lives, that decision is always hard.

Eddie and Nancy know how crucial pets are to our health, our peace of mind, and our happiness. And they know that many older people rely on their pets to address isolation and depression. They are concerned for older people in York and Cumberland counties who live on low incomes and can't afford the necessary veterinary care for their pets, and when needed, the cost of euthanasia and cremation. Because of that concern, they founded the Best Friend Fund of the Southern Maine Agency on Aging in 2010. They and other donors make yearly contributions to the Agency to help people meet those necessary costs.



Eddie Woodin with Madison and Morgan in April of 2010 on the launching of the Best Friend Fund. Photo by Nancy Robinson

Eddie told me "When pets suffer ill health and die, it's like losing a human family member, so we are willing to sacrifice when they become ill. We're in a difficult emotional state as we try to balance finances and the desire to provide helpful care. We created the Best Friend Fund to help ease the pain of that emotional turmoil. And then there's the loss. We had Madison cremated and have her ashes. Seeing her ashes every night is helpful. I think of the



great pleasure Madison gave us as a wonderful friend and am thankful for the memories we have of her."

Cindy, Dan, and their dog Gonzo of Sanford benefited from the Best Friend Fund in January when Gonzo, a much-beloved 14-year-old black lab/poodle/pug suddenly became very ill and needed to be euthanized. As they are on a fixed income and the need was so sudden, an Agency social worker applied to the Fund on their behalf. A partial payment to the veterinarian was approved and Cindy and Dan were able to pay the remainder of the bill. Cindy says, "We're very grateful to the Agency. I don't know what would have happened if it wasn't for the people who contribute to this Fund. Gonzo was the best dog, he was like a child for me and he helped me deal with my anxiety. The loss is still devastating for us. We miss him every day."

As pet owners, we all must weigh the benefit of prolonging the pet's life

continued on page 7

## Cabot Farmers' Gratitude Grille comes to SMAA

On August 22, SMAA volunteers and staff were the lucky recipients of **The Farmers' Gratitude Grille** courtesy of Cabot Creamery Co-op. The Gratitude Grille is one way that the farm families who own Cabot like to show their appreciation and support for the work that volunteers and community-service-based organizations like SMAA do on a daily basis. SMAA was chosen to have the traveling kitchen come to our main office in Scarborough.

Volunteers and staff received a delicious best pimento cheese grilled cheese lunch complete with a locally-sourced summer salad, cheese samples, and cookies for dessert.

Additionally, all SMAA volunteers are



now eligible to participate in the Cabot Reward Volunteers program ([rewardvolunteers.coop](http://rewardvolunteers.coop)) which provides volunteers extra opportunities to receive thanks and appreciation for all that they do.

On behalf of the staff and volunteers at SMAA we would like to express our thanks to Cabot and our grill-masters for the day, Cindy Stoker and Mark Hackett.

If you no longer want to receive the paper, please contact Bonnie at 396-6526 or 1-800-427-7411 x526 or [bcrraig@smaa.org](mailto:bcrraig@smaa.org).

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## Senior Discounts

By Don Kopp

Touring Great Britain, my wife and I noticed an unfamiliar road sign. It featured an exceedingly bent-over aged couple, the man shuffling along with the aid of a cane and the woman tottering behind, clutching onto the man for support. In large letters below this depiction were the words: “Elderly People.” Considering the clarity of the picture, one would hardly think that an explanation was necessary. But the point, we gathered, was to inform British drivers that their population included older people, some of whom occasionally might cross a road. You know, to get to the other side. Got it.



We came, however, to appreciate this special attention paid to older people upon our discovering that “elderly people,” such as ourselves, were entitled to “concessions,” meaning reduced prices at theatres, museums and other venues, even when we managed to get there without a cane. It turns out that in Great Britain, we were “concessionaires.”

Of course, here in America on this side of “the pond,” we talk about “seniors” and “senior discounts.” And although one would like to think that in this context the word “senior” means a person of a higher and superior rank and thus entitled to deference and respect—such as a senior officer or a senior partner—unfortunately other connotations of “senior” include “ancient,” “geriatric,” “over-the-hill,” “senescent,” and “unyoung” (which sounds like a horror movie’s “undead”). Consequently, now when I see “senior discount,” I unflinchingly substitute in my mind the word “concession.”

I am enthusiastic about “concession” because of its root word “concede.” I mean, why should conceding to me as an elderly person be limited to the cost of goods and services? Shouldn’t the reasoning behind conceding to me those lower prices have wider application? Shouldn’t, for example, the baby-faced policeman concede that I wasn’t really speeding? Or shouldn’t the IRS concede that I should pay a lesser amount in taxes? And perhaps most importantly, shouldn’t my children concede that I was right all along?

Yup, no question, I am now a dyed-in-the-wool “concessionaire.” It sure beats being “unyoung.”

Don Kopp can be reached at donkopp@sacoriver.net

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# SMAA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## BIDDEFORD/SACO/OOB

Adult Day Center – Kimball Health Center, Saco  
Mon-Fri, 7:30AM-5PM. 283-0166

A Matter of Balance – JR Martin Community Center, Biddeford, Oct 1 - Nov 19, 1:30-3:30PM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Chronic Pain Self-Management – HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, Saco, Sept 30 - Nov 4, 9-11:30AM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Community Café – JR Martin Community Center, Biddeford, Mon, Tue, Thur, and Fri, Noon. Reservations: 283-2477

Family Caregiver Support Group – Community Partners, Biddeford  
2nd Mon, 3-4:30PM. 713-3723

Living Well for Better Health – Paul Hazelton House, Saco, Oct 20 - Nov 24, 9:30AM-12PM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance – McArthur Library, Biddeford, Mon, Tue, Wed, call for appt. Linda Sprague-Lambert 776-4759.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Dyer Library, Saco. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Memory Café – Elements: Brooks Coffee, Biddeford, 2nd Thurs, 11AM. 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

## CUMBERLAND

Memory Café – Louie's Grille, 3rd Tues, 11AM. 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

## FALMOUTH

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts. – Falmouth Library. 396-6524 for appt.

## FREEPORT

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance – Freeport Library. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

## GORHAM

Memory Café – The Gorham House, 4th Tue, 1PM. 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – St. Anne's Church. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

## GREATER PORTLAND (CAPE ELIZABETH, PORTLAND, SOUTH PORTLAND, WESTBROOK)

A Matter of Balance – Woods at Canco, Portland, Sept 8 - Oct 1, 10AM-12PM (Mon & Wed) or NE Rehab, Portland, Sept 17 - Nov 12, 1-3PM, Registration (required) 396-6583

Community Café – Peoples Methodist Church, South Portland, Every Thur, noon. Reservations: 767-2255

Community Café – Cummings Center, Portland, 3rd Thurs, noon, Reservations: 878-3285

Community Café – Westbrook Community Center, Westbrook, Last Tue, noon, Reservations: 956-1348

Larrabee Village Nutritious Lunchtime Meal – Westbrook, 7 Days a week, 11:30AM, 854-6818

Maine Senior Games – Basketball: Women's, Sept 13, 8:30AM. Cape Elizabeth H.S.; Hot Shot/Foul Shoot, Sept 13, 3PM. Cape Elizabeth H.S.; Men's, Sept 14, 9AM. Cape Elizabeth H.S.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATED EVENTS: [www.smaa.org](http://www.smaa.org)

Maine Senior Games – 10 pin Bowling, Oct 5, 10AM. Yankee Lanes, Portland

Maine Senior Games – Pickleball: Men's/Women's Doubles, Sept 27, 9AM. South Portland Community Center; Mixed/Singles, Sept 28, 11AM. South Portland Community Center

Maine Senior Games – Racquetball, Sept 20, 9AM. Racket & Fitness, Portland

Maine Senior Games – Swimming, Sept 14, 9:30AM. Cape Elizabeth H.S.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance: Portland, Salvation Army; Woodford's Church. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for an appt.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance - Westbrook Community Center. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Memory Café – Beach Glass Transitions, South Portland, 1st Wed, 11AM, "Tech Café", 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

## KENNEBUNK/WELLS

Chronic Pain Self-Management – HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, Kennebunk, Sept 16 - Oct 21, 9-11:30AM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Community Café – Park Street School, Kennebunk, 1st Fri, noon, Reservations: 985-2588/329-5400

Community Café – Ross Corner Woods, Kennebunk, Mon, Tue, Thur, and Fri, noon, Reservations: 985-2588

Maine Senior Games – Cycling, Sept 7, 9AM, Kennebunkport Bicycle Company, Kennebunkport  
Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Kennebunk Senior Center, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – St. Martha's Church, Kennebunk. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Memory Cafés: Huntington Commons, Kennebunk - 3rd Thurs, 11AM; Seed & Bean, West Kennebunk - 1st Mon, 11AM. FMI: 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

## KEYS REGION (KITTERY, ELIOT, YORK, AND SOUTH BERWICK)

A Matter of Balance – Kittery Community Center, Sept 25 - Nov 13, 10AM-12PM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Community Café – Eliot Methodist Church, 11:30AM on Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, & Dec. 11, Health screening clinics available during luncheons by Cornerstone VNA, Reservations: 475-7399

Family Caregiver Support Group – The Gathering Place, Kittery, 1st Thurs, 3-4:15PM. 439-6111

Family Caregiver Support Group – Heart Health Institute, York, 3rd Tue, 1-2PM. 475-1167

Living Options for Older Adults – Marshwood Adult Education, South Berwick, Sep 30, 5:15-6:15PM. 384-5703 or marshwood.maineadulted.org to register

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – York Hospital. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Memory Cafés: The Inn at Sentry Hill, York - 2nd Tue, 11AM; The Gathering Place, Kittery - 3rd Wed, 12:30PM; A Perfect Move, Kittery - 4th Tue, 11AM; York Senior Center - 1st Tue, 11AM, Includes light lunch. 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

Welcome to Medicare Seminar – York Hospital. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 to schedule.

## KEZAR FALLS/HIRAM

Community Café – Sacopee Val. Rescue Barn, Hiram, 2nd & 4th Tues, noon. Reservations: 625-4057

## LAKES REGION (BRIDGTON, CASCO, NAPLES, AND SEBAGO)

Family Caregiver Support Group – Bridgton Community Center, 2nd Wed, 1-2:30PM  
1-800-427-7411

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Bridgton Community Center, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Naples Public Library. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

## NEW GLOUCESTER

Maine Senior Games – Table Tennis, Sept 19, 5PM. Pineland YMCA

## PARSONSFIELD

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance – Parsonsfield Town Office, 2nd Mon, 9AM-12PM. 396-6500/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

## SANFORD

Community Café – Nason Community Center, Springvale, 3rd Tue, noon. Reservations: 324-5181

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Southern Maine Health Care, Sanford, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Memory Café – Gentiva Home Health, Sanford, 2nd Tue, 11AM, 797-7891 or café@memoryworks.org

Welcome to Medicare Seminar – Southern Maine Health Care, Sanford, 1st Tue, 2-4PM. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 to schedule.

## SCARBOROUGH (SMAA MAIN OFFICE)

A Matter of Balance, Sept 26 - Nov 14, 9-11AM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Chronic Pain Self-Management, Oct 15 - Nov 19, 9-11:30AM. Registration (required) 396-6583

Family Caregiver Support Group, 4th Thurs, 12-1PM. 1-800-427-7411 x558

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts/Free Information & Assistance, Every Mon, Weds and Fri, 9AM-4PM, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for an appt.

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for an appt.

Understanding Cognitive Loss: Basics for Family Caregivers, Oct 9, 5:15-7:15PM. Registration required. 1-800-427-7411 x 540

Welcome to Medicare Seminar – 2nd and 4th Mon 2-4PM and 1st and 3rd Thurs, 10AM-noon. Call 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 to schedule.

## SCARBOROUGH

Blue Point Congregational Church Luncheon – Scarborough, 3rd Mon, noon, Reservations: 510-4974

Maine Senior Games – Candlepin Bowling: Singles – Sept 18, 10AM. Big 20 Bowling, Doubles – Sept 18, 1PM. Big 20 Bowling

Weekly Wednesday Lunches at Camp Ketcha – Scarborough, Every Wed, 11:30AM, All Welcome! \$5 for 60 and up, \$7 for all others. Reservations: 730-4150 by 2PM the Mon prior

## STANDISH

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts – Standish Municipal Center. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

## WINDHAM

Community Café – Unity Gardens, Catered luncheons Nov 14 and Dec 12, noon. Regular meals on Mon, Tue, Thurs, and Fri at noon, Reservations: 892-3891

Medicare 1-on-1 Appts - Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 for appt.

Welcome to Medicare Seminar – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1st and 3rd Tues, 10AM-noon, 396-6524/1-800-427-7411 to schedule.

## YARMOUTH/NORTH YARMOUTH

Community Café – Masonic Lodge, Yarmouth, Every Tue, noon. Reservations: 846-6693

## AARP Smart Driver Classes

There are numerous classes scheduled in Southern Maine during September through November. For a complete listing of classes being held in Maine, please visit [DriverSafetyME.weebly.com](http://DriverSafetyME.weebly.com).

For a nationwide listing, visit [www.aarp.org/drive](http://www.aarp.org/drive).

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## SENIOR MOMENTS

By Hunter Howe

### Idle Thoughts

With summer waning, my mind's still running on

idle. So, I've decided to ease into September and share some thoughts and observations:

If you appreciate razor sharp writing, read Kevin Cullen's columns in the *Boston Globe*. He nails sensitive issues with the best of them.

If you enjoy top-notch, fast-paced suspense novels, try anything



by Daniel Silva. You'll find yourself in England, Israel, Russia, and more points of the compass, wondering, what's going to happen next.

If you want to escape to France and Spain, rent the movie *My Way*. Martin Sheen plays a doctor whose son dies while hiking the famous trail, The Way of St. James or El Caminode Santiago. Sheen flies to France, views the body before cremation, and then decides to continue his son's journey, carrying the box of ashes, spreading a bit here and there, along the way. The now deceased film critic, Roger Ebert, called the movie "quietly positive." I found it touching, hopeful, and full of introspection. If nothing else, the local color and the scenery dazzle. Join Sheen on the hike.

Ever notice that you spend more time in the doctor's waiting room than you do in her office?

Hey hockey fans, the Portland Pirates return to play in the Portland Civic Center. And, mark your calendar for October 8 when the Boston Bruins start a new season facing off against those Broad Street Bullies, the Philadelphia Flyers.

Here's a big pet peeve of mine. Why do interviewers on TV say, "Let me ask you a question." Just ask the darn question.

Why do folks who can afford a \$200,000 recreation vehicle, motor to the old campground consuming massive amounts of fuel, and park two feet away from another rather large vehicle. Nothing like escaping to the spacious, great outdoors. What am I missing here? Feels like Brooklyn.

Remember when Katie Couric's husband, Jay, died of colon cancer. To promote colonoscopies, she had one on national TV. That sure took some guts. Well, I read an article in South Florida's *Sun-Sentinel* that said, "Andy Milovitch, the Vice President and General Manager for the Class A Myrtle Beach Pelicans will get a prostate exam (in his fight against cancer) in front of 6,600 people. And he'll do it while singing, 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame.'" Boy, that's some seventh inning stretch!

Many of us attempt to practice the skills of Social Intelligence but fail at one significant aspect, speaking less and listening more. To

point, Khalil Gibran said, "I have learned silence from the talkative." A Hebrew proverb refers to silence as, "The fence around wisdom."

September's an "S" month. Stop the idling and start your engines Seniors. Get revitalized with Donna Summer, The Spinners, and The Stylistics, the latter singing these lyrics in "Betcha By Golly, Wow":

*"You're the genie in disguise  
Full of wonder and surprise...  
If I could catch a falling star  
To shine on you so I'll know  
where you are."*

Now dance your own way into October.

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## Senior News

is a publication of



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Circulation: Mailed directly to 15,000 households and 7,500 are delivered to public places from Kittery to Bridgton and Brunswick. Another 500 are distributed through Agency on Aging events and locations. Total: 23,000

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## Mission Statement

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging's mission is to improve the quality of life for older adults, adults with disabilities, and the people who care for them.

## Commitment to Reasonable Accommodation:

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging will, with adequate notice and upon request, provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to persons with disabilities, to assist in effective communication and to participate equally in programs, services and activities. Call 1-800-427-7411 x503 or from the Portland calling area call 207-396-6503 to make your request.

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 provided through the Office of Aging and Disability Services of the Maine Department of Human Services. Learn more at [www.smaaa.org](http://www.smaaa.org) or by calling 207-396-6500 or 1-800-427-7411.

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging is committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for everyone regardless of his/her race, ethnic identity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, economic status, faith tradition, veteran status or life situation.





By: Vivien Eisenhart

## THE ONE HUNDRED FOOT JOURNEY

**Starring: Helen Mirren, Marish Dayal**

**Directed by: Lasse Hallstrom**

This is a truly touching story about the culinary world. Hassan Kadam (Marish Dayal) is a young chef from India. Hassan and family, led by the father, leave for Europe and end up in an adorable little village in the South of France with the grand plan of opening an Indian restaurant in the beautiful countryside.

Unfortunately where they decide to open is across the street from a famous French restaurant run by Madam Mallory (Helen Mirren). The family may have bitten off more than they can chew with culinary clashes. Hassan has a passion for the French cuisine and begins to enchant Madam Mallory with his culinary talents. What ensues is a magic between two cultures—surprises for all. This is a must see movie—a true delight. I was taken away to another world and give the movie five pumpkin breads.

## From the Director's Desk

continued from page 1

### Stewart Center Grand Opening

I am delighted to announce that the Stewart Center, a new Adult Day Center for people with dementia and other cognitive impairments, will be opening in late October in the re-purposed Lunt School building on the OceanView campus in Falmouth. After several years of researching, planning and fundraising, the Stewart Center will open as a true state-of-the-art facility which will provide the very latest and best model of care for those living with dementia and their caregivers. The Stewart Center is the first of two new Adult Day Centers that SMAA is building to help provide and safe and nurturing environment for people diagnosed with dementia, and respite and support for caregivers. We will have much more about the grand opening celebrations in the next issue of the Senior News but in the meantime, if you would like to receive additional information about the Stewart Center, please call Polly Bradley, the Director of Adult Day Services at SMAA at (207) 396-6512.

**Laurence W. Gross**  
Executive Director



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## Medicare Open Enrollment Starts October 15

**N**ow is the time to review your Medicare Drug Plans or Medicare Advantage plans. Mainers on Medicare are advised to make an appointment with their local Area Agency on Aging to review their options for 2015, because premiums and benefits may change.

Our fully-trained staff and volunteers can help you navigate the waters of Medicare and the complexity in choosing drug plans with deductibles, co-pays and falling into the coverage gap (the so called “donut hole”). This process can be confusing, time consuming, and in-

volving many steps (including using the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid website)—let SMAA help.

**Any changes to Medicare Drug Plans or Medicare Advantage Plans need to be made during Medicare’s Open Enrollment period, which begins October 15**

**and ends December 7, 2014.**  
SMAA is offering Open Enrollment sessions in various locations in southern Maine. See list below. Appointments are required and fill quickly—sign-up today!  
**Call 396-6524, or statewide, toll-free 877-353-3771 to make an appointment.**

Biddeford, McArthur Library Bridgton Community Center Falmouth Memorial Library Freeport Community Library Gorham, St. Anne’s Church Kennebunk, St. Martha’s Church	Naples Library Portland, Woodfords Church Portland, Salvation Army Parsonsfield, Town Office Saco, Dyer Library	Sanford, Southern Maine Health Care (formally Goodall) Scarborough, Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA) South Portland, Redbank Village Office	Standish Municipal Center Westbrook Community Center Windham, Our Lady of Perpetual Help York Hospital
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Durham Evangelical Church  
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For more information about ARA, see [www.unh.edu/ara](http://www.unh.edu/ara) or call Carol Caldwell, 603-343-1004

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## Saying Goodbye to Fuzz

By Stephanie MacNeille

One of the joys of aging is living with your pet. When I retired to Maine in 1999 I adopted a Himalayan kitten, Fuzz. A few months ago she was diagnosed with a progressive kidney problem and I began preparing myself for her death. She did not seem to be in any pain, but just walked slowly, didn't eat, then didn't drink. When she stopped drinking water, I could see she did not have long to live.

I called the vet who had treated Fuzz all her life, and they explained the euthanasia process. They told me that when she seemed ready to go, I should just



Fuzz enjoying her heated bed.

call for an appointment. By the next day, I knew she was ready (both physically and mentally). I made an appointment for noon that day. Then I sat on the couch with her in my lap, and we said goodbye for an hour or so.

To get ready, I took a towel which had my scent on it and put it in her carrier. Fuzz, who had never been a fan of that carrier, walked inside the carrier and lay down. My cousin, who accompanied me, said he believes animals know when their time has come to die. I told him what Fuzz had done, and he said, "She knows."

The people in the vet's office couldn't have been nicer. They let me pay the bill before I went into the examination room so I wouldn't have to deal with it on my way out. In the exam room, the vet and her assistant explained everything that would happen and why, and encouraged me to ask any questions I might have.

Fuzz normally would go to the back of the carrier and have to be dragged out when we had a vet appointment. This time, she lay peacefully on the towel and let the vet slide her out onto the table. Fuzz lay there looking around and even let the vet move her rear leg to show me where the anesthesia would be injected. They would inject enough to put her to sleep, then her heart would stop. I told them I was ready and they began the procedure. I was petting her with tears running down my face, then she just put her head down and was gone. The vet and her assistant stayed with us. It was clear they didn't want us to feel rushed or pushed out of there. They gave me the time to say goodbye.

I am tearful while I'm writing this because I loved her and will miss her, but not because she had any problem with what I have just described. She was accepting, peaceful, and died quickly and quietly. Having a vet euthanize Fuzz was a good option for me—made bearable because she was calm and ready to go.

## When it was Time, the Best Friend Fund was There

continued from page 1

and also acknowledge that we sometimes prolong that life because we fear the sense of loss we'll experience. Dr. Matthew Ford, a veterinarian at the Scarborough Animal Hospital says he always has a two-part discussion with pet owners about making a decision on euthanasia.

"I ask them first, what does the animal love to do most in life? Is their age or condition preventing them from doing that? The second part of the conversation is about the owner's quality of life. Owners often have difficulty factoring their own needs into the decision. How much time are they spending on care, how much money, how much anxiety? This is a two-way relationship."

He suggests that pet owners who are having difficulty making a decision about euthanasia ask the veterinarian, "What would you do if this was your pet?"

We often tell ourselves that our dog or cat doesn't seem to be in pain, yet how do we know? The ASPCA website helps us answer that question:

When cats and dogs are suffering, they may not show outward signs that we normally associate with pain like whimpering or crying. Sometimes an animal will continue to eat or drink in spite of pain, panting or disorientation. Some physiological and behavioral signs that your pet might be experiencing pain include:

- excessive panting or gasping for breath;
- reclusiveness;
- reluctance to move;
- food pickiness.

If you're unsure of how much your pet is suffering, keep a daily record of good days and bad days.

Stephanie MacNeille is a writer for Senior News who retired to Maine in 1999 and adopted Fuzz, a

Himalayan kitten. She describes her recent experience [Saying Goodbye to Fuzz] of making the decision to euthanize her cat and the consideration she received from the veterinary staff. "I am sad, and occasionally tearful, but not upset or bothered by how it went. They made it as positive as something like that could be. Now I am adjusting to a Fuzz-less life after almost 15 years, so it will take a while."

What about the loss and grief people experience after the decision is made? Dr. Ford tells his clients about the Pet Loss Support Hotlines for the ASPCA (877-474-3310) and Tufts University (508-839-7966). The people answering those phones, a veterinarian in the case of the ASPCA and veterinary students at Tufts, also help callers address the decision to euthanize.

The ASPCA's website's section on Pet Loss addresses how to deal with grief. This advice is especially important for older people. The most important thing is to recognize that the loss of a beloved pet is a serious event that society doesn't always respect. Your first task is to take care of yourself. Make sure you get the rest and nutrition you need, even when you feel distracted. Your concentration may be impaired, too, so that you need to take extra care with driving and crossing the street. Grief is a normal process, and time really does heal.

Every pet owner has a story about love and loss. Katlyn Blackstone is the Agency's Director of Community Services, in charge of the Agency social workers who manage the Best Friend Fund. In July she and her husband made the decision to euthanize their dog of 14 years. Katlyn says, "Our final good-bye to our beloved dog, Hattie, put us in the position of being 'pet-less' for the first time since we met, 25 years ago. Unlearning the routines that shaped all of our days—walks, feeding, play time, more walks – is still a work in progress."

Eddie and Nancy are making a contribution of \$1,000 to the Best Friend Fund in memory of their dog Madison. If you would like to join them, you can send your donation to the Best Friend Fund, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, 136 US Route One, Scarborough, ME 04074 or make an online donation at [smaaa.org](http://smaaa.org). Questions about utilizing the Fund can be directed to Kathy Baxter at 396-6500.

## The Blue Bowl

Like primitives we buried the cat with his bowl. Bare-handed we scraped sand and gravel back into the hole. It fell with a hiss and thud on his side, on his long red fur, the white feathers that grew between his toes, and his long, not to say aquiline, nose.

We stood and brushed each other off. There are sorrows much keener than these.

Silent the rest of the day, we worked, ate, stared, and slept. It stormed all night; now it clears, and a robin burbles from a dripping bush like the neighbor who means well but always says the wrong thing.

— Jane Kenyon

*Jane Kenyon (1947 – 1995) was a poet, essayist, and a translator from Russian to English of Anna Akhmatova's poetry. She married poet Donald Hall in 1972 and lived on their farm in New Hampshire until her death from leukemia at age 47. She was awarded the 1994 PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry.*

**Credit:** Jane Kenyon, "The Blue Bowl" from *Collected Poems*. Copyright © 2005 by The Estate of Jane Kenyon. Reprinted with the permission of The Permissions Company, Inc. on behalf of Graywolf Press, [www.graywolfpress.org](http://www.graywolfpress.org).

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## Agewell Schedule

### Living Well for Better Health

October 20 – November 24,  
9:30AM-12PM  
Paul Hazelton House  
7 Smith Lane, Saco

### A Matter of Balance

September 17 – November 12,  
1-3PM  
New England Rehabilitation  
335 Brighton Ave, Portland

September 25 – November 13,  
10AM-12PM  
Kittery Community Center  
120 Rogers Road, Kittery

September 26 – November 14,  
9-11AM, Southern Maine Agency on  
Aging, 136 US Rt 1, Scarborough

October 1 – November 19,  
1:30-3:30PM, JR Martin  
Community Center, 189 Alfred  
Street, Biddeford

October 3 – November 21, 1-3PM  
Basics Fitness  
380 Western Ave, South Portland

October 15 – December 10, 10AM-  
12PM. Woodfords Church,  
202 Woodfords Street, Portland

### Chronic Pain Self-Management

September 16 – October 21,  
9-11:30AM  
HomeHealth Visiting Nurses  
72 Main Street, Kennebunk

September 30 – November 4,  
9-11:30AM  
HomeHealth Visiting Nurses  
15 Industrial Park Road, Saco

October 15 – November 19,  
9-11:30AM  
Southern Maine Agency on Aging  
136 US Route 1, Scarborough

FMI or to register: 396-6583 or  
800-427-7411x583



FALLS FREE®

## Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014

### Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow

**M**aine is part of the national Falls Free® Initiative, which includes more than 40 states and 70 national organizations, professional associations, and federal agencies across the country dedicated to reducing fall-related injuries and deaths among older adults.

In recognition of Fall Prevention Awareness Day, Southern Maine Agency on Aging is collaborating with the University of New England, MaineHealth and others to offer fall-risk screening events in Southern Maine, along with information and resource tables to help people understand the risk factors for falls and learn more about fall prevention strategies and local resources.

Join us at any of these events to learn more about what YOU can do to prevent falls!

#### Fall-Risk Screening Events:

Monday, September 22, 1-3PM  
Southern Maine Agency on Aging  
136 US Route One, Scarborough

Wednesday, September 24,  
10AM-12PM  
Woodfords Congregational Church  
202 Woodfords Street, Portland

Wednesday, September 24,  
10AM-12PM  
JR Martin Community Center  
189 Alfred Street, Biddeford

Friday, September 26, 10AM-12PM  
Park Street School  
114 Park Street, Kennebunk



This used to be *all it took*  
for *her to remember.*

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To learn more, please visit our website, [capememorycare.com](http://capememorycare.com).

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### Tai Chi is an Excellent Resource for Fall Prevention

**A**ccording to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Tai Chi is a graceful form of exercise that involves a series of movements, known as forms, which are performed in a slow, focused manner combined with controlled breathing. It is a low impact exercise that puts minimal stress on muscles and joints—making it suitable for many older adults.

Tai Chi has been shown to improve balance and mobility, increase leg strength and flexibility, reduce fear of falling and improve mental well-being.

To get the most fall prevention benefit from Tai Chi classes, the CDC recommends that adults age 65 and older should:

- Attend Tai Chi classes at least twice a week and participate actively in class.
- Practice Tai Chi regularly for a total of 50 hours or more. This could mean taking a one-hour class twice a week for six months, or three times a week for four months.
- Maintain an upright (straight) posture at all times to reduce the chances of falling.



## September is NATIONAL PAIN AWARENESS MONTH

One of the hardest challenges of living with chronic pain is that it is an invisible disease. The person who lives with chronic pain may not know anyone else who is going through the same thing. It is very isolating to think you are the only one struggling with chronic pain.

With that in mind, we are pleased to join with the U. S. Pain Foundation, the University of New England's Center for Excellence in Neuroscience, the Chronic Pain Support Group of Southern Maine and Engine, a nonprofit arts organization in Biddeford, to promote "Beautify in Blue," an awareness campaign highlighting the bravery of people living with pain.

With an estimated 100 million Americans living with chronic pain, the purpose of these events is not only to raise awareness, but also to empower pain survivors and to connect them to helpful resources and each other. Campaign organizers hope to provide support to people living with pain by demonstrating that they are not alone. The campaign began with proclamations decreeing September as National Pain Awareness Month signed by state and

local officials across the country, including Governor Paul LePage, Saco Mayor Donald Pilon and Biddeford Mayor Alan Casavant.

Look for blue bows around trees, poles and signs on city properties throughout Saco and Biddeford placed in recognition of invisible pain and as an invitation to learn more. Other activities throughout the month will include a special exhibit of art works done in blue at Engine, 265 Main St. in Biddeford; educational presentations at the University of New England's Biddeford campus; and the Chronic Pain Support Group's meetings in Old Orchard Beach. Agewell staff will participate with presentations about the Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop and falls prevention programs particularly

helpful for people living with pain and their caregivers.

For more information, contact the U.S. Pain Foundation at <http://uspainfoundation.org>, the Chronic Pain Support Group at [www.painsupportgroup.org](http://www.painsupportgroup.org), or Annie Leslie at UNE ([aleslie1@une.edu](mailto:aleslie1@une.edu)). To learn more about Agewell's Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop, call 396-6583.



Susan Gold, representing the U.S. Pain Foundation, addresses the Saco City Council after Mayor Donald Pilon, left, proclaimed September as National Pain Awareness Month. Liz Weaver, second from right, represented SMAA at the event, and Ernest Merritt, right, attended on behalf of the Chronic Pain Support Group of Southern Maine.

Photo credit: John Gold

### Check Your RISK OF FALLING

Have you:

- Fallen in the past year?
- Been advised to use a cane or walker?
- Sometimes feel unsteady when walking?
- Are worried about falling?
- Push with hands to get up from a chair?
- Have trouble stepping up onto a curb?
- Have to rush to the toilet?
- Lost some feeling in your feet?
- Take medicines that can make you feel tired or light-headed?
- Take medicines that help you sleep or improve your mood?
- Felt sad or depressed?

If you've said yes to even one of these questions, you could be at risk for a fall. Talk with your doctor; learn more at a falls screening, or sign up for A Matter of Balance to reduce the risk of a fall.

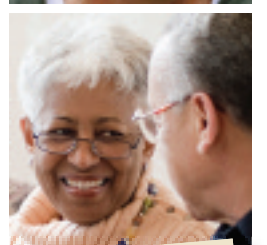
### What can you do to avoid a fall?

1. Get Active!
2. Ask for Help
3. Talk with your Docs
  - ➔ Get your vision and hearing checked
  - ➔ Manage medications
- ➔ Ask about a balance screening or falls risk assessment
4. Watch for Hazards in/around the home
5. Take a class
  - ➔ Call Southern Maine Agency on Aging today to learn more about "A Matter of Balance" and to find out when and where classes are being offered in your community.

### LIFE CHOICE HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

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[www.lifechoicehospice.com](http://www.lifechoicehospice.com)

Contact Krista at Life Choice Hospice  
207-761-6967  
or email  
[KFrazier@lifechoicehospice.com](mailto:KFrazier@lifechoicehospice.com)

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York

October 1, 2014  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Freeport

free flu shots • exhibitor booths • speakers  
antique appraisals (\$5) to benefit Alzheimer's Association  
afternoon music and entertainment

schedule and info: [www.MaineSeniorGuide.com](http://www.MaineSeniorGuide.com)  
[expos@MaineSeniorGuide.com](mailto:expos@MaineSeniorGuide.com)



From Jo Dill's Notebook

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**2014 Schedule  
(Remaining events)**

**Cycling:** September 7, Kennebunkport Bicycle Co, 9AM, Sunday

**Basketball (Women's):** September 13, Cape Elizabeth HS, 8:30AM, Saturday

**Hot Shot/Foul Shoot:** September 13, Cape Elizabeth HS, 3PM, Saturday

**Basketball (Men's):** September 14, Cape Elizabeth HS, 9AM, Sunday

**Swimming:** September 14, Cape Elizabeth HS, 9:30AM, Sunday

**Bowling Candlepin:** Singles/Doubles: September 18, Big 20, Scarborough, Thursday

**Table Tennis:** September 19, Pineland YMCA, 5PM, Friday

**Racquetball:** September 20, Racket/Fitness, Portland, 9AM, Saturday

**Pickleball:** September 27, Men's/Women's Doubles South Portland Community Center, Saturday 9AM

**Pickleball:** September 28, Mixed/Singles, South Portland Community Center, Sunday, 11AM

**Bowling 10 Pin:** October 5, Singles/Doubles, Yankee Lanes, Portland, 10AM, Sunday



**YMCA and Maine Senior Games**

The YMCA Alliance of Maine and Maine Senior Games have joined forces to raise awareness about opportunities offered by both state organizations for seniors to achieve greater health and fitness.

Maine is one of the first states taking action in a senior fitness awareness partnership that has been forged between the National Senior Games Association (NSGA) and the YMCA of the USA. NSGA governs the biennial National Senior Games, the largest multi-sport event in the world for seniors, and athletes 50 and over qualify at 51 member games, such as Maine Senior Games.

"We know there are many active seniors who are not aware of opportunities for fun, fellowship and fitness afforded by local, state and national Senior Games," said NSGA CEO Marc T. Riker "It made sense to reach out to other organizations with similar health and wellness missions, and the YMCA was at the top of the list to engage."

As a first step, the two organizations are formulating an action plan to utilize the communications channels of each to expand awareness with their members and the general senior population. This includes sharing information and links between websites and in newsletters, printed materials and email communications.

"We see a lot of opportunity to bring fitness to more seniors and to enhance their experience," said Jo Dill, coordinator for Maine Senior Games, which are administrated by the Southern Maine Agency on Aging. "The YMCA can be a great place for our athletes to maintain health and hone their skills. There are probably Y members 50 and over who don't know they can still compete in a favorite sport. So this awareness building partnership is a win-win for everyone."

**Registration**

There is still plenty of time to register for the Maine Senior Games. Athletes are encouraged to register online as it is much cheaper and saves me tons of time. You can still pay by check if you don't want to use your credit card. If you are having trouble registering or can't remember your passwords call Jo at 396-6519 for help. [www.mainesrgames.org](http://www.mainesrgames.org)

**Medical Support**

Medical support for the Maine Senior Games is sponsored by Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates owned by Ken and Gwen Simons. THANKS OPTA!

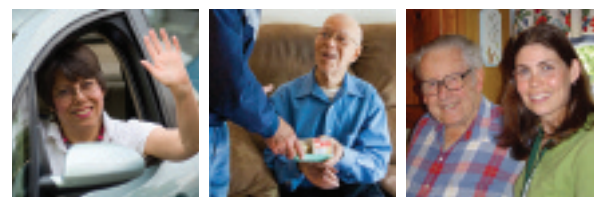


**Volunteers Needed**

Volunteers are still needed for the remaining events especially the Cycling which needs about 25 volunteers to make the event successful. Contact Jo at [jdill@smaaa.org](mailto:jdill@smaaa.org) or Rita at [rita\\_perron@hotmail.com](mailto:rita_perron@hotmail.com) if you are interested.

**Results & Pictures**

Be sure to check out [www.mainesrgames.org](http://www.mainesrgames.org) for the latest results of the events that have taken place. Results are usually on the website a week after each event. Pictures from the events will be posted on our flickr page: [www.flickr.com/maineseniorgames](http://www.flickr.com/maineseniorgames)



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"One of the largest volunteer networks in southern Maine delivers 800 meals to homebound seniors struggling with hunger. Along with those meals, they deliver dignity and compassion. Please join me in making a gift today for Meals on Wheels so that no senior goes hungry."

—Senator George Mitchell

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Contact the Southern Maine Agency on Aging at [www.smaaa.org](http://www.smaaa.org) or call 1-800-400-6325 or (207) 396-6583



[www.mainesrgames.org](http://www.mainesrgames.org)



## Women and Social Security

By Elizabeth Newport  
Social Security Public Affairs  
Specialist, Portland, ME

Women's Equality Day was held on August 26, and this is the perfect time to remind you how much Social Security values and appreciates women. Even though men and women with identical earning histories receive the same benefits, there are things women in particular should know about Social Security. There are trends and differences in lifestyle and patterns of earnings that can affect benefits.

For example, some women may be caregivers for many people: spouses, children, and parents. Taking time away from the workplace to care for a child, ailing spouse, or aging parent can have an impact on your future Social Security benefits.

Also, despite significant strides through the years, women are more likely to earn less over a lifetime than men. In addition, women are less likely than men to be covered by private retirement plans, so they are more dependent on Social Security in their retirement years.

Did you know that women tend to live on average about five years longer than men? This means more years depending on Social Security and whatever other retirement income or savings they accumulate.

If a woman's spouse earns significantly more than she does, it is possible she will qualify for a larger benefit amount on the spouse's record than on her own. To learn more, visit our Women's page at [www.socialsecurity.gov/women](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/women) and read, print, or listen to our publication, *What Every Woman Should Know*.

You may also be interested in listening to Carolyn Colvin, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, on National Public Radio as she talks about women and money. Just visit [www.npr.org/2014/04/15/301782870/social-security-chief-women-live-longer-so-they-should-save-early](http://www.npr.org/2014/04/15/301782870/social-security-chief-women-live-longer-so-they-should-save-early).

To celebrate Women's Equality Day, learn how Social Security treats men and women equally by visiting [www.socialsecurity.gov/women](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/women).

how to age gracefully.

My mother, who lived to be 101, is someone who lived a long, happy, and productive life. Her philosophy was the happiest people are the people who think of others before themselves. I am sure that her positive attitude, her faith in God, and her habit of walking five miles every day well into her eighties, added to her longevity. She was also blessed with good genes as her father lived to be 99 and her mother 87 years old. One of our favorite family stories was when my grandfather brought a refrigerator on time payments at the age of 95. We still laugh about this—less so when he wielded a chainsaw at 96.

Becoming a widow at 70 my mother declared she had to have a life of her own and not be dependent on us 4 children, and she proceeded to do it. She moved into a senior retirement home and immersed herself in all the activities. She became president of the Tenants Club, called bingo, and ran a Craft club. A whiz at cribbage she taught foster

grandchildren how to play the game. An avid quilter she made a quilt for everyone in the family. We all have these cherished possessions to remind us of a beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. In her eighties she traveled to Europe, Bermuda and all over the USA. She watched her diet but never refused a hot fudge sundae or a chance to go out for an ice cream cone.

Growing up what a fun mother she was. She let us roller skate in the house, (the kind you put on over your shoes with a key), and play ping pong on the dining room table. She taught us all to swim, fish, and row a boat. We learned card games and board games from her and she taught us to sing old Broadway songs. When we were teenagers, unlike a lot of parents at the time, she did not think Rock and Roll would corrupt us and she let us jitterbug, jive and do the twist with the record player on high volume belting out Elvis, Chubby Checker and Little Richard. Her mantra was never to argue with a teenager, and

we could not engage her in an argument. Her first answer was her last answer. She knew what was important: honesty, kindness, good morals, and hard work.

She scoffed at long obituaries and when she read that 92-year-old had died "unexpectedly" she thought that was funny.

My mother and her family had survived the Spanish flu Pandemic of 1918. It was one of the deadliest of natural disasters in human history. It killed 50 million to 100 million people. Her father saved the family from this deadly affliction by isolating them at their camp which could only be reached by boat. It was there that they waited out the pandemic. My mother remembered the times at camp as idyllic, summers of swimming fishing and boat rides.

Ironically she died of influenza at age 101 on March 8, 2008 at 11:20PM. Her last words to her family were "I love you". Her obituary was short and sweet.



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## Maine Roots: Longevity

By Elaine Parker

How long do you want to live? Most people will say as long as I have good quality of life, but many people when bedridden, on oxygen and gasping for breath will cling to life. But really what I want to address here is





# Family Caregiver Support Program



Are you helping an older adult manage bills, prepare meals, manage medical services? Do you help with bathing or dressing, household chores, transportation to appointments, or companionship? Are you a senior who is raising someone else's child? **Then you are a Caregiver.**

Is caring for a family member or friend 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.

## Changes... Lots of Changes

**Ann O'Sullivan,  
OTR/L, LSW, FAOTA  
Family Caregiver Support  
Program Coordinator**

The Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA started in 2001, after Congress reauthorized the Older Americans Act and added funding to support family caregivers nationally. I had the privilege of being hired to develop the program for SMAA. Since then, it has continuously evolved, as we work to identify and meet the changing needs of family caregivers in our area, respond to grant opportunities, and create innovative programs.

Kate Fallon has been a key part of the Family Caregiver program since 2004. Over the past 10 years, we learned to deliver the Savvy Caregiver evidence-based program, helped develop the Savvy Caregiver Advanced program, wrote the train-

er and participant manuals for Savvy Advanced, created and delivered caregiver classes on more than 30 topics, developed support groups, and worked with thousands of family caregivers as they assisted older adults and people with dementia. Kate developed an innovative series about Ongoing Loss, for people caring for someone with dementia. This past fall, Kate decided to devote some of her time to recreating her private counseling practice, Ageless Journeys, and it has now grown to the point where it needs her full attention. She has been a key member of the Family Caregiver team. July 23rd was her last day at SMAA, and I know I'm only one of many people who will miss her greatly. Thank you, Kate, for your many contributions, hard work, insight, empathy, and friendship.

As the Administration on Aging

grants for Savvy Caregiver have come to an end, we have had to rethink how we best utilize our time and energy to provide the strongest and most useful services possible. One effect of the grants ending is that, although we will continue to offer them, we will probably hold the Savvy Caregiver classes less frequently than we have in the past.

We are also considering how well our support groups meet caregiver needs. Attendance has been light for our monthly noontime support group at SMAA for a number of months now, and we have decided to discontinue that group. We are currently doing a trial of an evening support group, and will decide after the September meeting whether to continue that offering.

Despite funding and staffing changes, we continue to serve many family caregivers – more than twice as many so far in 2014 as in 2013! We continue to provide individual support, problem-solving, and assistance to family caregivers of older adults / people with dementia; classes for caregivers, professionals, and the community; support groups; written materials; and consultation with other professionals who are trying to best serve family caregivers in their practice environments. Our plan is to continue to offer the services and supports that are most helpful, and to make the most of the skills and abilities of the Family Caregiver program team: AnneMarie Catanzano, Lori Campbell, and myself. Our goal, as it has been from the start, is to help make caregiving easier and reduce caregiver stress, so that family caregivers can continue to provide needed assistance and remain healthy themselves.

## Understanding Cognitive Loss: Basics for Family Caregivers

SMAA's Family Caregiver Support Program will again be offering the two-hour session, Understanding Cognitive Loss: Basics for Family Caregivers, on Thursday evening, October 9, at the SMAA office in Scarborough. This class was developed for family caregivers: those who may have questions about someone's cognitive abilities and losses, those who are helping someone early in the course of a dementia, and those who may not be able to attend a full Savvy Caregiver series.

The class covers different conditions that can affect a person's cognitive abilities, how specific thinking skills might change, and strategies that can be helpful for family caregivers of people who are experiencing difficulties with their thinking.

If you are a family caregiver for a person who has been diagnosed with dementia, or about whom you have concerns, we hope you will sign up. Please note, this session is not appropriate for people who themselves have dementia. The class size is limited, so pre-registration is required. Please contact the Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA, 1-800-427-7411 x 540, to add your name to the list.

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## Help For People Helping Aging Family Members

### Caregiver Class Schedule 2014

**A**re you assisting an older adult? Do you spend time helping with errands, household chores, finances, meals, health care or personal care? The **Family Caregiver Support Program** can help support you as you help someone else.

September 30, 5:15-6:15PM: **Living Options for Older Adults.** Marshwood Adult Education, South Berwick. Register by phone (384-5703), online at <http://marshwood.maineadulted.org/>, or in person at the Adult Ed office behind Marshwood High School.

October 7, 14, 21, 28, November 4 & 18 (no class Veterans' Day, November 11), 5:15-7:15PM: **Savvy Caregiver.** SMAA, Scarborough. Donation requested. Contact Lori Campbell at 1-800-427-7411 x540 to pre-register (required).

October 9, 5:15-7:15PM: **Understanding Cognitive Loss: Basics for Family Caregivers.** SMAA, Scarborough. Donation requested. Contact Lori Campbell at 1-800-427-7411 x540 to pre-register (required). Please use the numbers listed to register. Feel free to call the Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA (1-800-427-7411) with questions.

## Training for Family Caregivers of People with Dementia

**W**e will be offering the Savvy Caregiver series again in October 2014 on Tuesday evenings (see class schedule in this issue of Senior News). I was surprised to realize that this series will be the 50th time the course has been offered by SMAA! The program is to open family caregivers of people with dementia who live in the community. Participants tell us that the class is helpful to them in understanding the person with dementia and in finding strategies to help them both have a better day.

Family and friends are often unprepared for the role of caregiver for a person with cognitive loss. The Savvy program helps develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make helping a person with dementia work better. We have been offering the program for six years under federal Administration for Community Living grant funding, and follow-up survey feedback from caregivers five months and one

year after taking the course has been overwhelmingly positive. The original grants have ended, as has the more in-depth survey process, and we will continue to offer the course ongoing because it has been shown to be so helpful.

Several recent classes have filled early, so we encourage you to call us as soon as possible if you are interested in the course. Please contact the Family Caregiver Support Program at 1-800-427-7411 to pre-register (required) or if you have questions or would like to talk about your caregiving situation. If the next class is not convenient for you, we will be happy to take your contact information and notify you as we schedule additional courses after the first of the year.

## Caring For Aging Family Members

### Support/Discussion Groups

**Y**ou're not alone. Connect with other caregivers in a safe setting. Find out what's working for other people. Groups are coordinated by SMAA or the community providers listed.

**Biddeford:** For caregivers of people with dementia. Second Monday of the month, 3-4:30PM AND Second Monday of the month, 6-7PM, at Community Partners, Inc. Contact Barbara Alberda at 713-3723.

**Bridgton:** For caregivers of an older adult or person with dementia. Second Wednesday of the month, 1-2:30PM, at the Bridgton Community Center. Contact Ann O'Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 x 541.

**Kittery:** Respite available onsite for a fee; please call ahead to reserve. First Thursday of the month, 3-4:15PM, at The Gathering Place. Contact Jill Larson at 439-6111.

**Saco:** For caregivers of an older adult or person with dementia. First and third Thursday of the month, 3-4PM at Truslow Adult Day Center. Contact Edie Reno at 283-0166.

**Scarborough:** For caregivers of an older adult or person with dementia. Third Thursday of the month, 5:15-6:30PM at SMAA. Contact Lori Campbell at 396-6540.

**York:** For family and friends assisting an older adult with a chronic condition. Third Tuesday of the month, 1-2PM, at the Living Well Center. Contact Susan Kelly-Westman at 475-1167

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## Saunders Brightens Up Truslow Center

This article was reprinted with permission from the Journal Tribune.

By Liz Gotthelf

A decorated rain barrel at Truslow Adult Day Health Center is a work of art that shows the bond between a young woman and her grandfather and also appreciates the services the center provides.

Program Director Debra Thomas asked 19-year-old Alana Saunders to paint a rain barrel. Saunders is the granddaughter of Truslow participant Elbert Putney.

"I was glad to do it, because Truslow takes such good care of my granddad," said Saunders.

Putney, 97, lives alone across the street from his daughter and her family. He goes to the Truslow Center twice a week since his wife, Jean, died, and has made lots of friends, said his family.



Alana Saunders and her grandfather, Elbert Putney, stand on either side of a rain barrel that Saunders is decorating at the Truslow Adult Day Center in Saco.

"They have great entertainment," he said, and he also likes the food.

Saunders sketched out a design on the rain barrel and has been painting it. The design includes a picture of participants at the center looking out the window, wildlife and several references to her grandfather, including a picture of a fox that lives near his barn.

She also worked with other Truslow participants and had them color butterflies with their names on them to decorate the barrel, so that they all could have a part in the project.

Saunders, who is studying graphic design at York County Community College in Wells, said she regularly makes artwork for family members, including personalized birthday cards.



A poem Saunders wrote is painted on the rain barrel

WILLIAM S. HOLT, MD

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"She's just so clever, she should work for Hallmark," said her mother, Ann Saunders.

Alana Saunders has also compiled a book on her grandfather. Putney is a World War II veteran and served as the grand marshal in the Biddeford and Saco Memorial Day parade this year.

"He's living history," said Ann Saunders. During a conversation at the Truslow Center on a recent morning, Putney said he met his wife dancing to Big Band music in Old Orchard Beach, and together they raised four children.

Putney worked as a secretary for Saco Lowell Mills and played on the company softball team, scoring the winning hit at a New England competition.

Putney has survived multiple brushes with death. While serving in World War II, he was tossed around and thrown against the side of the ship during severe weather and survived because of the helmet he was wearing, he said.

As a young boy, he fell into a pond and would have drowned, if not for a unknown passerby that saved him.

"He has a guardian angel," said his granddaughter.

Putney recalled living during the depression, and having one slice of bread for the seven people in his family.

"We couldn't get any food at all," he said.

When asked about his secret to a long life, he said he never drank or smoked.

"He always keeps a positive attitude. He's always cheerful," said Alana Saunders.

"He has a strong faith in God," added Ann Saunders.

Putney's friend, fellow Truslow participant Jim Emmert, said Putney is the type of person who typically thinks of others before himself.

"He has done everything and above what this country asked of him," said Emmert.

"Not once does he brag. He doesn't brag one iota."

Journal Tribune Staff Writer Liz Gottself can be contacted at 282-1535, ext. 325 or [egottself@journal-tribune.com](mailto:egottself@journal-tribune.com).

## Medicare and Home Health Services

**From The Medicare Rights Center: a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs and public policy initiatives.**

If your doctor says that you might benefit from home health care services because of your illness, keep the following in mind:

**Home health care** is defined as care you receive at home in order to treat an illness or injury. Medicare does pay for home health care services, but only under specific circumstances. Medicare will pay for home health care only if you meet all four of the following requirements:

1. You are *homebound*, which means you need the help of a person or equipment to leave your home, and it is extremely difficult to do so;
2. You require *skilled care* on an intermittent basis, such as *skilled nursing care* or *skilled therapy services* that must be administered by a licensed nurse or therapist;
3. Your doctor has signed a home health certification stating that you qualify for Medicare home health care because you are homebound and need intermittent skilled care. The certification also must state that you have a *plan of care* that is regularly reviewed by your doctor. As part of this plan of care, you must have a face-to-face visit with your doctor related to the main reason you need home care within 90 days of starting home health care or within 30 days after the start date; and
4. You receive your home health care services from a Medicare-certified *home health agency (HHA)*.

If you meet all four of these requirements, Medicare should pay for the skilled care that you receive in your home. The Medicare home health care benefit will cover skilled

nursing care, which are services and care that can only be performed safely and effectively by a licensed nurse, such as injections or wound care. The home health benefit will also cover skilled therapy services like *physical, speech, or occupational therapy*. Note that if you need only occupational therapy, you will not qualify for the Medicare home health care benefit. However, if you qualify for Medicare home health care on another basis, you can also get occupational therapy. Medical social services, and certain medical


supplies provided by the Medicare-certified home health agency, such as wound dressings and catheters that are needed for your care, are also covered under Medicare's home health care benefit.

You will continue to receive home health care for as long as you qualify for the benefit. However, your doctor will need to approve a new plan of care every 60 days for the benefit to continue. Note that you do not need to meet face-to-face with your doctor each time you renew your plan of care, but you must do so when first developing your plan of care. If you have *Original Medicare*, the traditional Medicare program administered directly through the federal government, Medicare pays the *full cost* of home health care.



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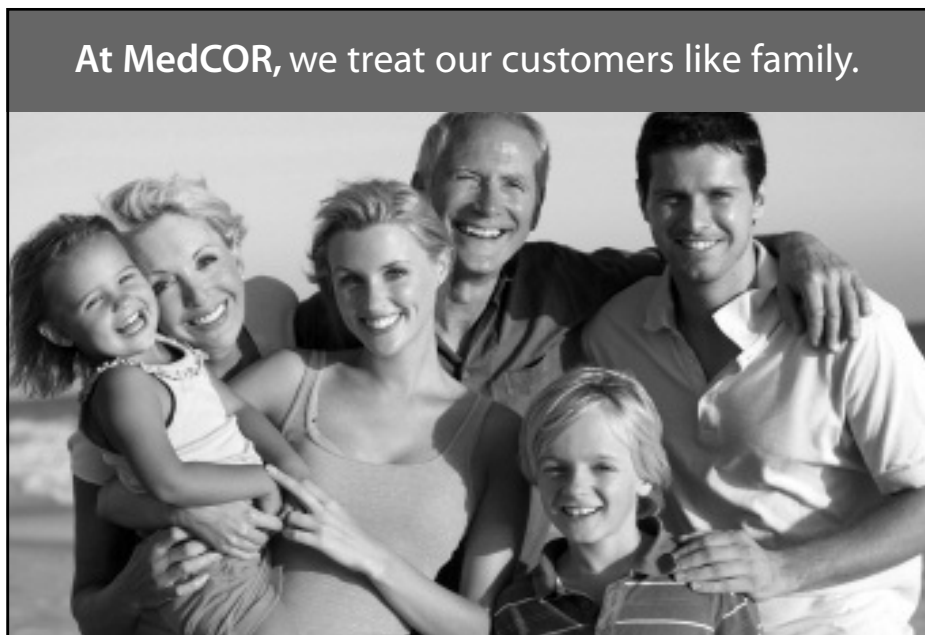



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## Truslow Woodworking Club Donates Projects to Local Day Care

The Woodworking Club at Truslow Adult Day Center has been busy in the past months sanding and painting wooden puzzles from scraps of wood. The scraps are cut in many different shapes by volunteer and husband to one of our members, Bill Robbins. According to Bill “it keeps me busy and I enjoy doing it!”

Once the puzzles were sanded and painted the members of the club asked, “What are we going to do with them?” A staff member who oversees the club made a phone call to a local day care Little Treasures Child Care in Saco to see if they would like a donation of the hand-made puzzles.

Truslow Staff and Woodworking Club members visited Little Treasures

Child Care to make their donation to the 15 children at the day care. The children and members faces lit up with smiles when playing with the puzzles. “It was better than Christmas seeing their eyes light up,” a woodworking club member said with a big smile.

Clubs, like the ones at Truslow, foster relationships not only between members, family and staff but with people of different generations and within the community. Clubs at Truslow strive to be member driven which then can become purposeful and meaningful.

We would like to express our thanks to Deering Lumber for their donation of wood and supplies for use by club members.

## Culture Change Means Better Days for Adult Day Center Members

By Elisha Stickney, CTRS

“Culture Change” is happening at the Truslow Adult Day Center in Saco. “Culture Change” is a national movement aimed at transforming older adult services – such as adult day centers. It is based on person-directed values and practices where the voice of elders is respected. Core person-directed values are choice, dignity, respect, self-determination and purposeful living. Our goal is to develop an adult day center day program that is aligned with the philosophy of the culture change movement.

Members now receive three assessments when they arrive at the Truslow Adult Day Center—the first assessment tests their cognitive status, the second, their potential for depression and the third is a

recreation and leisure interest form. Using the information gathered from the three assessments members are invited to programs that best suit their interest and have the potential for the most benefits. At Truslow the process is in constant motion on a daily basis where staff are implementing and evaluating programs and members and as a result new clubs have been created based on member’s interests.

The staff at Truslow is finding that they are less involved in the “leadership” role of the club with many of the clubs starting to run themselves. The Knitting club is a group where members work on their scarves or pot holders without any staff assistance. The French Club is a place where members get a chance to use (often times) their first language, French! Since none of the staff speak French they have complete independence.

The Book Club has been reading through Jack Orth’s *Memory Bank*, the Front Porch Travels group brings in photos of vacation destinations or favorite places to visit, and our arts and crafts group works on making things to give away as prizes for other games at the Center.

Clubs who do have staff involvement are using the staff as a resource instead of relying on them to be a leader. Because of this shift of leadership the staff is available to spend more time with members who need more assistance. We are providing a better quality of life to all our members by giving back to them their core values—choice, dignity, respect, self-determination and purposeful living.



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## Meet Joan MacCracken, Author

Joan MacCracken, M.D., a retired pediatrician, is the author of *The Winter House*, an engaging novel about four older women who opt to live together during a Maine winter in Downeast Maine. The women, who come from different walks of life, find themselves facing another winter alone when one of them suggests sharing a house. In addition to sharing expenses, they support each other in a myriad of ways. This fictional work is also a framework for a social conversation on an alternative way we can approach aging and avoid social isolation. To learn more about Dr. MacCracken and her work go to: <http://www.tiffinpressofmaine.com/books.html>. She will be speaking at the Brown Bag author's lunch series on Friday, September 19 at noon, at the Portland Library, 5 Monument Square in downtown Portland.



physician, I wrote frequently but did not have time to devote to writing fiction. While on a yearlong sabbatical, I wrote a memoir about a very special summer camp for families living with diabetes, entitled *The Sun,*

*the Rain and the Insulin: Growing Up with Diabetes.* While working in Nicaragua, I adapted a native folk tale to a children's book entitled, *Trisba and Sula*, which was awarded the Best Bilingual Children's Book for 2006 by Skipping Stones magazine. Four years ago I began writing *The Winter House.*

**How did you get interested in the concept of communal living and how did that interest turn into a novel?**

My first experience with communal living was in college. My senior year I lived with seven other female classmates. At that time in my life, having roommates was a completely natural progression. Somehow as we age and get used to one partner, we forget how supportive and beneficial roommates

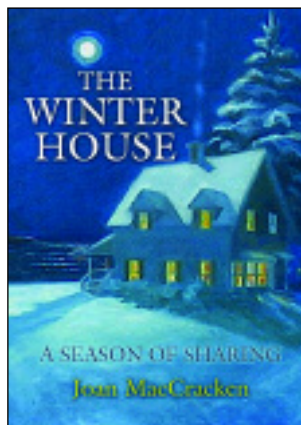
can be. When I retired, I began working with a steering committee to develop At Home Downeast, a member-based, volunteer-supported program of the Washington Hancock County Community Agency, designed to support area senior residents with services enabling them to live independently at home. As I assisted these wonderful elders, the muses danced in my head, bringing life to the story of *The Winter House.* It seems so logical and beneficial to live communally in our later years. It's more efficient, safer, healthier, and a lot more fun.

**One of the characters is a physician. Did you draw her based on your own experience as a physician?**

Every writer brings a bit of herself into the story. I did not draw the character to represent me. However, I did use my medical knowledge and understanding of various health issues to craft some plot lines.

**Are you working on another book?**

Possibly. I am just beginning the contemplative phase, and my muses have just begun to collaborate. In the meantime, I am enjoying life with my husband, Dr. Robert Holmberg, and our dog on the beautiful Blue Hill Peninsula.



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## Rock & Roll Oldies Benefit Dance

An "Oldies Benefit Dance" will be held on Saturday, September 20, from 7:30-11:30PM. The dance will take place at the Elks Lodge on Ocean Park Road in Saco. The dance is Rock & Roll Oldies music from the 50's, 60's, 70's provided by OLDIES 'R' US. There will be prizes for a dance contest, trivia questions and door prizes.

Proceeds from the dance will benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Portland.

Tickets are \$10 per person. Tickets are limited to 150 and are going FAST. Call Dave at 934-5941 or contact the Elks at 283-1597 for tickets or more information.

**How long have you been writing?**

I remember enjoying writing from an early age. In third grade, we were given a weekly challenge to look at a photo and write about it. I quickly developed an interest in writing. As I grew up, I wrote in a journal regularly. Throughout school and during my career as a

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- 3 Are there simpler, safer options?** Sometimes all you need to do is make lifestyle changes, such as eating healthier foods or exercising more.
- 4 What happens if I don't do anything?** Ask if your condition might get worse — or better — if you don't have the test or procedure right away.
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# VOLUNTEER SERVICES & RSVP

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## CATCH Holds Special Family Program in Westbrook

At the request of Abigail Carter, the coordinator for children's programming at Westbrook Community Center, CATCH Healthy Habits developed a special, one night family program for the children participating in Jump Start (a summer camp designed to strengthen the literacy skills of children preparing to start kindergarten in the fall). Knowing that students who eat well and are physically active do better in school, Ms. Carter asked us to present to the children and their families.

We started the evening with a Stellar Sundae: yogurt with fresh banana, strawberries and blueberries and a Graham cracker. One little girl made hers into an "ice cream sandwich".

We talked about GO and WHOA foods. Then we went "shopping" where children can sort food between GO or WHOA shopping bags.

Keeping with the reading theme, we read *End of the Rainbow Fruit Salad* (part of the Kitchen Club Kids series). *End of the Rainbow Fruit Salad* talks about how we should eat a rainbow every day. The book uses colors and numbers to walk the reader through the preparation of a healthy treats from one golden chopped pineapple, two orange papayas... through nine red strawberries for ten servings of health treats.

Then children, parents and the Jump Start teachers got to play! Our first game was See You Later, Alligator, a tag game where hula hoops are safety spots and tagged participants had to do five jumping jacks to earn the right to rejoin the game. One of the teachers loved the game, telling us she had hoops and

was going to teach it to the whole class the next day.

Thanks to Peggy York, Laurie Lin and Pat McDonald for presenting this very energizing evening.

### A Special Moment

Volunteer Olga Schimmer recently shared a great experience via email: "Yesterday, I was shopping at Hannaford and this little girl approached me. She said 'Remember me from the Standish CATCH? I will be going to the third grade next year.' She then proceeded to ask me if I was shopping for GO food. It really impressed me that this 2nd grader remembered and got something out of our CATCH program."

GO foods are fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, lean meats and fish, whole grains, seeds and nuts. Water is the GO beverage. WHOA foods have added sugars, fats and salt.

### New This Fall

CATCH Healthy Habits is expanding. Starting later this fall, we will be presenting healthy lifestyle programs to adults 50 and over. It will have the same basic structure with a healthy snack, short nutrition lesson and some physical activity. A resource manual, including healthy recipes will be distributed to attendees.

We are currently recruiting volunteers to lead the programs. All curriculum and materials will be provided by the grant.

Interested sites are encouraged to invite us in. This might include senior housing, senior recreation groups or other sites that serve people 50+.

### Other Fall Plans

As of August, we are planning programs for East End Community School, Standish Recreation and Westbrook Recreation. Other re-

quests are expected. We need more volunteers to meet these requests. Help fight childhood obesity. Maximum commitment is 13 weeks.

To volunteer or learn more about CATCH Healthy Habits please call Sharon at 396-6523 or e-mail [ssschulberger@smaa.org](mailto:ssschulberger@smaa.org).

*CATCH Healthy Habits is a program of The OASIS Institute and funded by the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation. CATCH Healthy Habits received the 2012 Maine Fitness Award in the Adult Category from the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness. Volunteers received the Anthem Community Angels Award in 2013 and 2014.*

## Priscilla Greene, Volunteers' Best Friend

After almost 30 years as SMAA's indomitable Cumberland County Volunteer Coordinator, Priscilla Greene will move on to a new part-time position promoting the Stewart Adult Day Center for the Agency. Through the years Priscilla has found worthwhile positions for thousands of volunteers and has filled slots for dozens of nonprofits in desperate need of help. Almost everyone who has anything to do with volunteerism in Cumberland County—and beyond—knows Priscilla and her ability to place volunteers in the job best-suited to each one of them.

At 86, she has more energy than many people half her age. A world traveler who has visited at least 20 countries, Priscilla enjoys tennis, outdoor activities, and dancing and follows a regular exercise routine at the gym.

She has seen many changes in the years she has worked at SMAA. In the past she participated in many off-site events for SMAA, modeling for Chico's and Jordan Marsh as part of Elders' Day at the Maine Mall, selling bagels and coffee at Deering Oaks for a SMAA fundraiser, and interviewing volunteers in their homes and personally accompanying them to their volunteer posts.

"Her enthusiasm for her volunteers is absolutely incredible," said Melodie Provost, coordinator of Project Linus, who met Greene in her work as Volunteer Coordinator. "Priscilla is always so upbeat. She's remarkable."

Priscilla grew up in Medford, Massachusetts, and attended Tufts College and the University of Southern Maine, earning a degree in social science and a teacher's certificate. She was taking graduate

courses in history when her husband and her father both died. With three young children to raise, she got a job as a recreational therapist for people with disabilities with the City of Portland. In 1986 she accepted the Volunteer Coordinator position with SMAA and made the job her own.

Priscilla has always tried to get to know all her volunteers so that she can find them positions they will enjoy. One of the most difficult—and most rewarding—placements she made involved a woman who lived in a nursing home, who needed a wheelchair to get around and could not use her arms. Nothing was wrong with her brain, however, and she wanted to do something to help others. Priscilla arranged for her to be a friendly visitor to a lonely, housebound woman who lived nearby. Greene even made arrangements for a transportation

service so the woman in a wheelchair could visit on a regular basis.

After years of dedicated service, Priscilla received the Woman of the Year award from the Beta Sigma Phi sorority for her work in volunteerism.

Many of the people who find volunteer placements through Priscilla have become her friends. Priscilla remembers fondly one volunteer who made afghans for hospice and nursing home patients. For years, Priscilla picked up the afghans and delivered them for the woman, who became a close friend. When the elderly woman died, in her nineties, her daughter told Priscilla that she had kept her mother alive for at least the past two years. "She always said, 'I can't die, I have to finish this afghan for Priscilla.'"

In her new job, Priscilla will help promote SMAA's Stewart Adult Day Center, which will provide state-of-the-art day services for adults with dementia and other illnesses. She also plans to put her skills to work finding volunteers for the center.

"Volunteering," she says, "is a three-way street really. It helps the person who is volunteering to feel that they are giving back for the good life they have had. It also helps the community at large and especially small nonprofits, which depend on volunteers to exist. And it helps the recipient of the volunteering. Many times volunteering changes people's lives."

*Priscilla said she would love to hear from the many volunteers she has known through her work at SMAA and learn how they're doing. She can be reached at 7 Blueberry Lane, C-9, Falmouth, ME 04105.*



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## Great Volunteer Opportunities Await You

**S**outhern Maine Agency on Aging's Advance Health Care Planning (AHCP) project is looking for volunteer facilitators. AHCP facilitators work individually with people who are beginning their advance health care planning, choosing a health care agent, talking with family about their wishes or need clarification about what is involved in an advance health care plan. Three-day training for new volunteers is scheduled for September 8, 1-5:00PM, September 11, 10AM-4PM and September 29, 12- 5PM.

The AARP Tax Aid Program is looking for a coordinator for the upcoming tax season. Interested volunteers should have:

- Experience in supervision and implementing of programs.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse populations.
- Familiarity with tax procedures is helpful.
- Detailed tax knowledge is not required.

The Tax Aide Program is part of the AARP Foundation, the charitable arm of the AARP. Funding for the program comes primarily from the IRS and the AARP foundation. This program is all volunteer run with a small paid staff in Washington DC. Nationally, approximately 35,000 volunteers are involved in the Tax Aid Program.

Training starts in the early fall.

A Volunteer Gardener is needed at Southern Maine Agency on Aging to tend our small garden areas around the building here in Scarborough. If you love gardening and have time to spare this opportunity may be right for you from spring through fall.

This is just a sampling of the volunteer opportunities awaiting you at SMAA/RSVP. To learn more about becoming a volunteer, contact us at 207-396-6525, 1-800-427-7411 ext.525 or by email: [volunteer@smaaa.org](mailto:volunteer@smaaa.org).

Visit us at [www.smaaa.org](http://www.smaaa.org) or on Facebook to check us out!

## SMAA Adds New Collaboration to Advance Health Care Planning Seminars

**S**outhern Maine Agency on Aging is continuing to help people do long range planning with regard to their health care choices should they become unable to speak or choose for themselves. Several medical practices with Maine Medical Partners in greater Portland have been participating in the program for over a year. Starting in October several practices with Prime Care in the Biddeford/Saco area will be joining us. We have set our fall schedule for Advance Health Care Planning seminars:

September 25, 2-4PM at SMAA in Scarborough

October 21, 2-4 PM. at Peoples Choice Credit Union in Saco

November 20, 2014, 2-4PM at SMAA in Scarborough

December 16, 2-4PM at Peoples Choice Credit Union in Saco

Please call SMAA at 207-219-0155 or email us at [volunteer@smaaa.org](mailto:volunteer@smaaa.org) to register to attend one of these seminars.

## Vet to Vet Seeks New Recruits to Visit Veterans

**S**MMA's Vet to Vet project is seeking volunteers who have served in the military to become visitors to brighten the lives of aging veterans and veterans with disabilities.

Volunteers visit the veterans in their homes twice a month and call on the off-weeks. They provide needed companionship, chat, and swap stories. The volunteer and the veteran set their own schedule and determine what they do together. Some go out for coffee or lunch, others sit and chat or participate in activities in which they share an interest. The most valuable gift volunteers bring to the veterans is their time. The most valuable gift they receive in return is a sense that they have made a difference in the lives of other veterans. They come away from the experience with some fascinating stories—and a new friend.

Volunteers attend a nine-hour training course to familiarize themselves with services available to the veterans they will be visiting so they can make referrals to other programs if needed. The classes, three sessions of three hours each, also offer training in effective listening, dealing with difficult situations, medical issues, setting boundaries, and other information to help them during their visits.

The next training session will be held in Biddeford Savings Bank's

community room, 234 Main Street, Biddeford, on September 16, 18, and 23. To join the next team of Vet to Vet volunteers or to receive visits, contact Southern Maine Agency on Aging's Volunteer Services Department at 207-396-6525 or toll-free, 1-800-427-7411, ext. 525; e-mail [volunteer@smaaa.org](mailto:volunteer@smaaa.org); or visit the agency's website at [www.smaaa.org/veterans.php](http://www.smaaa.org/veterans.php). The program is open to anyone who has served in the military, combat and noncombat, men and women. FMI: call Susan Gold at 207-396-6500, ext. 600.



**Susan Gold promotes the Vet to Vet project she created and coordinated as a VISTA volunteer with SMAA.**

Photo credit: Sharon Hickey

## Vet to Vet Project and SMAA Video Lasting Results of VISTA Service

**S**usan Gold, who has served in SMAA's Volunteer Services department for the past year as a VISTA volunteer, ended her term on August 8 after creating a program to benefit veterans, producing a video on SMAA's programs and services, and completing various other assignments.

Susan has accepted a position as part-time Volunteer Coordinator with SMAA and will continue her work as coordinator of the Vet to Vet program. The Vet to Vet program recruits and trains volunteers who are veterans themselves to visit older veterans and veterans with disabilities in their homes and refer them for services when needed. The first team of veterans began visits in late May and currently serve 14 veterans in York and Cumberland counties. A second team of veterans

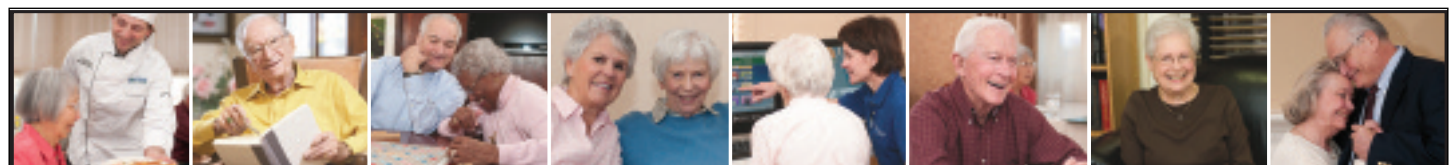
will go through training in September. Two other agencies—in Bangor and Waterville—are using SMAA's Vet to Vet project as a model to replicate the program in their areas.

"The success of the Vet to Vet project has been so rewarding," Susan said. "I am honored to serve with such dedicated volunteers and veterans who have given so much already to our country. I'm hoping this program will spread beyond Maine and brighten the lives of many more veterans."

During her year of service, Susan also assisted with updating the Volunteer Services' section of [smaaa.org](http://smaaa.org), simplified various forms, edited and redesigned the volunteer handbook for recruits, created ads for the advance health care planning program, designed a brochure for the statewide Savvy Caregiver program, and consulted on SMAA's new media consent form. The video she wrote and directed on SMAA will be used as an orientation tool for new staff and volunteers as well as an informational piece. She is also working on a video of Vet to Vet volunteers and the veterans they serve. The finished version, a contribution of the Law Offices of Joe Bornstein, will be used to recruit new volunteers, publicize Vet to Vet, and raise funds for the project.

"I am grateful to VISTA and to SMAA for allowing me the opportunity and providing the support for such meaningful service," Susan said. "The experience has enriched my life and introduced me to some wonderful people."

The Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program began in 1965 as a national service program to fight poverty. It became part of AmeriCorps in 1993. VISTAs commit to serving full-time for a year at nonprofits, helping to build organizations, improve services, and expand programs that help communities throughout the nation. Volunteers receive a small stipend and an education grant or bonus at the end of a year's service.



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Miriam Gibely, RN, Swing Bed  
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