I seniors who were home alone on holiday dinners were delivered to volunteers in other communities, 231 Portland. Together with SMAA Wheels on Christmas delivering Meals on Wheels at Christmas marked its 33rd year. SMAA also partnered with the Portland Rotary Club, which marked its 33rd year delivering Meals on Wheels on Christmas Day in greater Portland. Together with SMAA volunteers in other communities, 231 holiday dinners were delivered to seniors who were home alone on Christmas Day.

**Governor’s Supplemental Budget**

Since early December Maine’s Agencies on Aging have been working to help educate legislators and seniors about the effects of Governor LePage’s proposed cuts on programs serving older Maine people. These proposals are compromising an already fragile safety net, with more than 70,000 low-income seniors affected.

We know most low-income seniors are struggling to pay for food, heat and other necessities these days. Some people who lose benefits will stop taking their medication or will not take it as prescribed. This will result in avoidable hospital costs and emergency room use as they become ill and require medical attention. That will cost all Mainers much more.

We encourage you to call your own legislators, particularly about the proposed elimination of the Drugs for the Elderly (DEL) program, which will result in more than 5,000 low-income seniors losing benefits. Another 40,000 people will lose some or all of their benefits under the Medicare Savings Program (MSP). Details about the cuts and how to reach your legislator are covered in an article on page 10.

Legislators have been asked to make a decision by the end of January, so time is of the essence. Your legislator is your elected representative and wants to hear from you! Calls should be made to legislator’s listed cell or home phones. Weekends and evenings are good times to call, because they’re home. The calls made to legislative offices will go to voicemail or be answered by a clerk.

Thank you for whatever part you can play in helping to prevent the loss of health benefits for low-income seniors.

**Care Transitions Contract Signed**

SMAA was named one of only seven organizations across the country selected to expand the Care Transitions Intervention Program. We will be helping Medicare beneficiaries avoid complications that can result in avoidable hospital readmissions. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has contracted with SMAA and its partners to help an estimated 5,800 Medicare patients this year. Nurses and social workers will coach Medicare beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions to stay in contact with their doctors, manage their medications and learn how to respond to “red flag” symptoms.

**Other News**

Please see page 11 for our Annual Report to the Community and an article by Stan Cohen, SMAA volunteer and former board member, on page 12 about Medicare Advantage Plans and the grace period to revert back to traditional Medicare, which ends on February 14th.

Thank you for reading Senior News. I wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

Laurence W. Gross Executive Director

**Twin Sisters Host Community TV Show, Emerge as Local Celebrities**

By Jerry Harkavy

Dianne Senechal of Buxton says she was simply repaying a favor when she reluctantly agreed to film a half-hour cable TV show for her community’s access station. Senechal and her twin sister, Donna Sawyer of Limington, had no idea that their amateurish first effort that aired over the Memorial Day weekend in 2009 would set the stage for what has become a popular weekly attraction on Saco River Community Television.

“Garden Thyme,” now in its third season, has turned Senechal and Sawyer into local celebrities in Buxton, Hollis, Limington, Standish and Waterboro, where the show is available to 8,200 Time Warner Cable subscribers.

The sisters, who turn 65 in January, also have cultivated fans from well beyond the geographical limits of the six towns. Other public-access channels in Maine and other regions of the country have picked up “Garden Thyme,” which can be downloaded from the Internet.

The show’s appeal reflects the twins’ knowledgeable gardening advice, as well as their humorous repartee that’s unrehearsed and delivered in thick Down East accents.
Gold Nuggets from Truslow Adult Day Center
By Debra Thomas, LSW, Program Manager

After just three weeks of attending our Center a wife reports that her Army veteran husband has begun singing old Army songs in French, the words to which “he hasn’t remembered or sung in years!” The family desperately needed him to attend the Center to give them a break. They never expected that he would be willing to continue attending. Due to his memory loss, this gentleman believed in the past that he needed to be somewhere, anywhere but where his family wanted to take him. Now he has found just the place he wants to be!

We have a new man who joined our program who arrived in a wheel chair. We were informed by his caregiver and the rehab facility where he resided for several months that he used the wheelchair exclusively. One of our staff asked him if he would like to walk, which he does all the time now and leaves his wheel chair at the door. The staff member was so moved by his response when she asked him if he would like to walk, because he cried and said, “No one has asked me if I wanted to walk.”

These are just two of our most recent incredibly sweet stories. We’re so happy to help improve the quality of life for our participants and their families!

For more information or a free trial visit at Truslow Adult Day Center in Saco, contact Debra Thomas at 283-0166 or dthomas@smaaa.org.

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GALS By Don Kopp

Driving by I caught a glimpse of two women of a certain age sitting on a farm-house door step, morning coffees in hand. It had snowed the previous night—in October no less—and now was blustery, but the morning was bright. They were in their shirtsleeves, or “blouse sleeves” I suppose, sheltered from the wind, bathed in sunlight beaming and reflecting on them off snow-white walls. They were beaming, too, their warm smiles reflecting an affection matured over time between very good friends.
The Bombardier
By Hunter Howe

This is the first of a four-part series on the life of one man, a story within so many other stories. It takes place during World War II, a time when many young Americans answered their country’s call and marched off to serve their nation. Many paid the ultimate sacrifice, never to return home.

Dean Whitaker, 86, lives in Las Vegas, Nevada. He shared his compelling story with me, one “dedicated to my five crew members that did not return and are buried in veteran’s cemeteries in Europe. For them I fly my flag every day.”

Part I focuses on the years 1941 through 1944, covering his late teens, enlistment and training.

Dean grew up in Maywood, a small city in southeast Los Angeles County, California. “On the quiet Sunday morning of December 7, 1941 I was working in a gas station when a customer raced in to tell me the news that the Japanese had secretly bombed Pearl Harbor.”

“Everyone that came in had their radios on, listening for the latest news. Everyone was wondering what was going to happen next. Living so close to the coast, the thought of attack was in my mind.”

With two years left to finish high school, “going to war seemed remote.”

In February 1943, he graduated. Duty beckoned. “Originally, I had planned to go to college and become an architect. This was a year of decision. With the world engrossed in a fierce war that was taking a decision. With the world engrossed in a fierce war that was taking a
different branch of the service: Marines, Army and Navy.

Dean enlisted in the Army Air Corps with three of his best friends. “We decided on the Army Air Corps because they had the best uniforms and because we thought their song, ‘Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder’ was really cool. We took off to sign up for the glamorous program of becoming an Aviation Cadet.” They traveled to the recruitment center, the old Electric Pacific building in Los Angeles, where they passed a physical and written exam. Dean made the cadet program and his buddies went into the aerial Gunnery program.

In April 1943 he reported to the Santa Ana Army Air Base for basic training, the objective classification as a pilot, navigator or bombardier. Joe DiMaggio, the famous Yankee and future Hall of Famer, trained there at the same time. “Yes, we had a great baseball team.”

Although selected for bombardier training, the new class was filled. So instead, in November 1943 he reported to the Kingman Gunnery School in Arizona for the aerial Gunnery course, waiting for another bombardier class to open.

“Gunnery school was a blast for me. I had hunted with my dad and brothers since I could carry a BB gun. My first gun was a .22 caliber rifle from Sears and Roebuck given to me as a Christmas present at age 14.” A natural, he out-shot many of his instructors. No surprise, Dean won the highest score firing the twin .50 caliber machine gun from the turret of the B-17, shooting at a target towed by another plane.

“Flying for the first time was a thrill. The thought of being afraid was overcome by the joy of floating in the air. With my 6’2” frame, crawling from the nose to the rear was difficult due to a cramped angle in the bomb bay.” Dean continued to achieve. “I ended up with the highest score in my class and was selected to compete in a national Gunnery meet in Las Vegas, with all the schools participating.” He took first place in field stripping and putting the .50 caliber machine gun back together again.

In March 1944 Dean arrived at the Victorville Army Air Base in the Mojave Desert in California to begin the new bombardier class that included navigation training. “We flew in AT-11s, which were twin engine trainer planes. The pilots were older men that would not be actually flying combat missions. Most of the fun came when bombing low-level targets and scaring up jackrabbits and coyotes. Our dare-devil pilots loved doing this and sometimes the planes would show the telltale signs of notches in the propellers from clipping telephone or electrical wires.”

As Maywood was only 60 miles away, he often drove home in his modified 1936 Ford. “I was a true California hot-rodder. My fellow trainees called me the Hot Rod Kid.”

Graduating from Victorville, Dean received his wings as a Bombardier-Navigator, attaining the rank of Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps.

In May 1944 he was sent to Rapid City Army Air Base in South Dakota “where our crew was organized and became Newman’s Crew,” named for first pilot, Herb Newman. “The 10 crew members’ ages ranged from 18-27 and consisted of a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer, radio operator, tail gunner, waist gunner, ball turret gunner and nose gunner.”

Assigned to a B-17 for two months, we flew together learning to work as a team. We practiced bombing runs with simulated attacks by enemy planes and other exciting adventures. Unfortunately, a tragic happening occurred when one of the other planes crashed, killing all on board.”

In July 1944 the crew took a troop train to New York City. “All thoughts of crossing the Atlantic on continued on page 19
New Year’s Resolution

Support the “Senior News”

Many thanks to the 229 people who have donated to the ongoing production of “Senior News” in the last year. It costs about $10,000 to produce and mail each issue, so every donation helps!

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

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“Love your Senior News! It’s full of good info.”
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“Thank you for sending me Senior News. I LOVE it.”
“Please accept my $20 donation for Senior News. It is always packed full of good information to help us ‘oldies.’ Thank you so much.”

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Need a Warm Coat?

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging has vouchers for a coat from any of the area Goodwill Stores. Coats are for men and women age 60 or older.

Call 396-6543 to have a voucher mailed to you

Mission Statement

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

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.

ATTENTION: Winter Snowbirds

If you want the “Senior News” stopped for the winter or forwarded to your winter address, please let us know. If your mail is returned to us it costs us money and besides, if you want the “Senior News,” we want you to receive it. Contact Bonnie Craig at berraigm@smaaa.org or leave a message at 207-396-6526 or 1-800-427-7411 x526. Be sure to specify the effective dates, when you will leave and when you will return to Maine. Happy reading!

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### Happy New Year!

2012 will be a qualifying year for National Senior Games to be held in Cleveland, Ohio—the U.S. Rock & Roll Hall of Fame city—July 21 - August 5, 2013. Medal Sports offered will include Archery, Badminton, Basketball, 10-Pin Bowling, Cycling, Golf, Horsehoes, Pickleball, Race Walk, Racquetball, Road Race, Shuffleboard, Softball, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Track & Field, Triathlon, and Volleyball. If you medal in Maine you’ll qualify to compete in Cleveland.

### 2012 Schedule

- **Swimming**: Moved to Cape Elizabeth High School
- **Men’s Basketball and Swimming**: Held on the same day
- **Track and Field**: Adding the 50 yard dash and moved to July
- **Golf**: Moved to Nonesuch River Golf Course
- **New Sport**: Pickleball (see below)
- **Racquetball and Pickleball**: Held on the same day

### Save the Date

Grab your sneakers and head to Scarborough High School on Sunday, June 10th for an “Explore Track and Field Day.” This is a day for you to be able to explore all the events that Maine Senior Game’s offers in track & field. This is your chance to try out an event without pressure or competition. You will be able to participate in several events or just one! Events offered: 50m, 100m, 220m, 440m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m, long/triple/high jump, shot put, discus, javelin and race walking! Coaches will be on hand to help out. More information in the next issue...

### What on earth is Pickleball?

Before you get hysterical at the name or get a brain cramp trying to figure it out, check out a game or go online and search for it! It is a fast-paced game played on a smaller tennis court, with a paddle and a whiffle ball. The game is spreading like wildfire especially in warmer climates where the sport can be played outdoors while we are knee deep in snow!

The rules are similar to tennis. The ball is served underhand starting from the right-hand side of the court and served diagonally to the opponent. Points are scored by the serving side only when the opponent fails to return the ball or hits it outside. The game is to eleven points and you must win by two points. Pickleball competition will be a one-year trial for the Maine Senior Games and only doubles will be offered.

### Open Enrollment: Volunteers Help Reach Many More

Thanks to a group of active Volunteer Medicare Advocates and SMAA staff, 5,471 people reviewed their prescription drug plans and were insured of having the most cost-effective plan during the last year. SMAA Volunteers and staff gather for lunch between morning and afternoon appointments during 2011 Medicare Open Enrollment. Pictured in the front row: Carol Rancourt, Lorraine LaChappelle and Jim Baker. Middle row: JoAnn Innis, Mary Hadlock, Vivien Eisenhart, Amy Hatch, Annette Fournier, Kathy Baxter and Debbie DiDominicus. Back row: Steve Goodman, Mary Bums, Norman LaChappelle, Jane Ashley, Barry Wolfson and Vicki Durrell. To get involved, call Mary Hadlock at 396-6309.
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.

Family caregivers are the backbone of elder care in Maine and across the U.S. Thank You!

Strategies for Managing Conflict for Caregivers

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

Many families get together during the winter holiday season. While this can be a time of reminiscing and catching up with people, it can also sometimes be a time when disagreements, old and new, come to the surface, particularly if issues are present relating to how to best support an older adult family member. Every family has disagreements from time to time; it is part of family life. Conflict itself isn't necessarily a problem. However, the way it's handled can be positive, or can be stressful and damaging to relationships. When older adults require assistance, conflicts may arise between them and those providing the help, or among other family members relating to the care provided. Capable, functioning adults may find themselves resorting to roles and rivalries from childhood when these caregiving conflicts arise. Disagreements may come up around many issues, including the older adult's health and abilities, the balance between safety and independence, future planning, finances, and how care is provided or shared. There is no one right way to deal with family conflict but some strategies have proven helpful for different situations.

Decide if the issue is worth fighting over. Anyone who has ever parented an adolescent is familiar with the concept of “picking your battles.” This also applies in other family situations. If you don’t really care about the outcome, if it’s impossible to influence the other person, or if the stakes are too high to engage in the conflict, you could choose not to enter into it. This option can have other negative side effects, like keeping unresolved issues on the table, so the trade-offs need to be considered.

There may also be times where preserving harmony is a priority, or where the issue is so much more important to the other person that you choose to accommodate their wishes. Giving in might create frustration for you, but is sometimes a stepping stone toward a larger solution. This may also serve as a gracious way to admit you could be wrong.

Try to be clear about separating the issue from the person with whom you are disagreeing. Define the problem and stick to the topic. Although it can be tempting, do try not to bring up past conflicts. Stay focused on the present situation and on finding a solution. Bear in mind that the goal is to resolve the conflict, not necessarily to win the argument. Find points of common ground or else agree to disagree.

Treat people with respect. Listen to what others are saying and ask questions to clarify. If the other person feels you are hearing them, they are more likely to listen to you in return. Never forget that competent adults of any age have the right to make their own decisions. Don’t give up on communication unless you’re also ready to give up on the relationship. Sometimes, people need to take a break from a discussion to get some perspective or to calm down, but it’s important to come back to the topic if the conflict continues.

Try to agree on an overall goal (“We all want you & them to be safe and happy.”). Discussion can then focus on how to achieve that goal.

Brainstorm solutions. Be willing to compromise to achieve the goals you agree are most important. Identify a solution to try out, and a way to check in to make sure it’s working. Be clear about who will take responsibility.

Hopefully, family conflicts, and the process of resolving them, will lead to better communication and solutions that work for everyone.
Community Education in Westbrook

The Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA is partnering with the Westbrook-Warren Congregational Church to offer some classes of interest to older adults and family caregivers. Some are scheduled to follow the weekly community luncheon held at the church, and others are planned for evenings, to make it easier for working caregivers to attend.

Here’s what’s scheduled so far:

Class Schedule 2011-2012

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12

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

February 9, 1-2PM: Ongoing Loss and Resilience

Westbrook Congregational Church, Westbrook. Open to the community.

March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 3 and 10

January-February 2012

Monday, March 12, 6-7:15: Beginning Planning for Eldercare

Crooked River Adult Education, Casco. Call 627-4291 x21 to register (required).

April 10, 6pm-7:30PM: Caregiving, Stress and Self-Care

York Adult Education, York ME. Call 363-7922 to register (required).

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

What do you need?

RE: Younger Onset Dementia

The Family Caregiver Support Program at SMAA will be partnering with faculty at the University of New England to learn more about the needs of family caregivers of people under the age of 65 who are diagnosed with dementia. Nationally, more individuals are being diagnosed earlier in life, and we have seen a similar increase in our contacts here at SMAA. Our goal is to learn more about what would be most helpful for these caregivers. If you are assisting someone under 65 who has dementia, or have connections to people who are, please contact Ann O’Sullivan at 1-800-427-7411 or aosullivan@smaaa.org. We hope to use an online survey and perhaps a focus group to explore how this experience might best be improved. Thank you.

Your Keyboard

Facebook Page

The Family Caregiver Support Program has entered the world of social media with a Facebook page! “Like” us and receive updates about classes, groups, events and news right on your own page. Start at the FCSP page at www.smaaa.org and click on the “Like” button. If you use Facebook, join us! Or, visit our website as classes and tip sheets are updated regularly!
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Healthy Legs at Any Age
By Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen

Your legs ache and veins throb, but that’s just part of aging and there’s nothing you can do about it. Right? Not true. I became a phlebologist (vein specialist), because there’s plenty you can do.

First, a quick review of the part that veins play in circulation. Your legs are like a network of veins. Healthy veins carry blood from your feet back up to your heart. Venous insufficiency, or vein disease, occurs if the veins become damaged and allow the backward flow of blood in the legs.

This pooling of blood can lead to a feeling of heaviness and can cause skin changes such as “spider veins” or a brown, woody appearance to your lower legs. Left untreated, it can lead to leg pain, swelling and serious health problems.

As people age, vein issues become more prevalent. Small problems that started in younger years can turn into larger vein issues. The skin begins to lose its elasticity and doesn’t respond to stress the way it once did. But these are the “end organ” of venous disease—ulcers, and even bleeding can occur as a result of swollen veins.

Though vein disease is almost completely hereditary, there are things you can do to help prevent its progression—and ease your discomfort. Walking is key. It causes the rhythmic contraction of calf muscles and, like a pump, forces all the blood into your deep veins and helps promote blood flow to the heart.

Walk at least 30 minutes every day, either all at once, or in shorter increments. I have one dedicated patient who walks for two minutes, five times a day! She takes a stroll around her house every half-hour.

Although seniors have a 50% greater chance of suffering from venous insufficiency, treatment options today are minimally invasive, highly successful, and are not reserved for the young.

One of my favorite patients is a ninety-one-year-old woman who drives from Florida to Maine every summer. One year during her drive, she developed a clot called deep vein thrombosis (DVT), which can rapidly result in pulmonary embolism (when the clot separates and travels toward the heart or lungs). I treated the DVT immediately, but her exam also revealed a bad superficial vein—the likely reason for the DVT—so we treated that too. She’s still making that yearly drive to Freeport, where she works at a campground. Her vein disease could have changed her life forever, but after treatment she’s made an incredible recovery and can keep on going.

Seminar & DVT Leg Screening March 21 from 2-4 at SMAA
Join Dr. Asbjornsen, founder of the Maine Phlebology Association and the Vein Healthcare Center, on Wednesday, March 21, from 2-4 at the main office of the Southern Maine Agency on Aging for a seminar on vein health, free and open to the public. Free venous leg screenings, with a focus on Deep Vein Thrombosis will be available. Registration is required, so please call 207-221-7799.

2012 Cost of Living Adjustments

The latest Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is 3.6 percent for Social Security benefits and SSI payments. Social Security benefits have increased by 3.6 percent beginning with the December 2011 benefits, payable in January 2012. Federal SSI payment levels will also increase by 3.6 percent effective for January 2012 payments.

Because the normal SSI payment date is the first of the month and January 1 is a holiday, the SSI payments for January are always made at the end of the previous December.

Railroad Retirement recipients will see a similar COLA increase. This will mean a real increase for seniors as a result of Health Care Reform provisions, which have reduced the cost of Medicare over the past year. Medicare B premiums will increase by $3.50 at the most and will be reduced for many by as much as $15.50 per month. This represents a real increase to seniors’ monthly “take home” benefit.

Mini Dental Implants and You—Take a Bite Out of That Apple!

Dr. Glen Knock

If you, a friend, or a loved one wears dentures that spend much of the time either floating around in the mouth or, even worse, sitting in a glass, then there are many new solutions to this problem. Many people wear their dentures for too many years before they are re-made or even relined. Sometimes this is due to the fact they weren’t told to get them checked every year. Sometimes the patient just can’t afford to keep up with the maintenance. A lot of the time, they just “get used to them” and forget about doing anything further about their dentures.

The American Dental Association recommends that dentures be redone or relined every 3-4 years. The main reason for this is that the bone supporting the dentures will erode away if they don’t fit correctly, hence they get “loose.” When this happens simple biting becomes a chore and a hopeless feeling of ever being able to bite into an apple. Even worse, many people are fine with this feeling, but many others wish that something could be done about it.

One solution could be as simple as remaking the denture to the eroded ridges. Sometimes this will improve the bite tremendously. Another solution could be to reline the inside of the denture to fit better. Most dentists are capable of doing these procedures, which are the least expensive.

To truly have “Tight Dentures” the placement of Mini Dental Implants can be a Godsend. These tiny, FDA approved titanium implants have revolutionized dentistry and have made thousands of denture wearers able to “bite into that apple.” A Mini Dental Implant, once placed, can anchor an upper or lower denture and keep it from dislodging and “floating” around in the mouth. No need for all that goopy denture adhesive—it becomes a thing of the past. The upper denture can be so well anchored with “Minis” that it can be horsehoe shaped and not have plastic in the roof of the mouth! Most of the time, to do this, several implants have to be placed.

Another great advantage of the Mini Dental Implants is that they are one-third to one-half the cost of conventional implants. And most of the time they only require one visit! Next time we’ll talk about how Mini Implants can be used to replace one or more missing teeth.

Glen C. Knock, DDS
Falmouth Dental Arts
207-781-5900
KnockOutSmiles.com or PortlandMaineDentists.com
Governer’s Proposed Cuts
21,545 People in Southern Maine Would be Affected

Governor LePage’s Supplemental Budget contains proposed cuts that will disproportionally affect low-income Maine seniors. One of the worst proposals is elimination of the Drugs for the Elderly Program (DEL) and severe cuts to Maine’s Medicare Savings Program. You can do something about these proposed cuts!

The Appropriations Committee has held public hearings and is currently working the Governor’s Supplemental Budget. The Committee will make a decision on proposed cuts by the end of January. Now is the time to call your legislator and senator and members of the Appropriations Committee to tell them these cuts are going in the wrong direction.

Approximately 72,000 seniors and people with disabilities would lose some or all assistance they currently receive to prescription drug costs.

Of the 72,000 people:
- Approximately 40,000 elderly and disabled people in Maine will lose all or some of the help they currently receive through the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) to help pay for Medicare premiums, co-payments and deductibles, prescription drug costs and coverage through the so-called “donut hole.”
- More than half of these people live in southern Maine (12,466 live in Cumberland County and 9,079 live in York County).

Of the 40,000 people:
- 12,500 with annual incomes between $16,335 and $20,147 (150% - 185% of FPL) will lose all assistance.
- Potential maximum loss could be as high as $3,755 directly out of pocket plus all drug copays.
- 6,500 with annual incomes between $14,702 and $16,335 (135% - 150% of FPL) will lose most assistance.
- Potential maximum loss could be as high as $3,755 directly out of pocket plus all drug copays.
- 21,000 with annual incomes between $10,890 and $14,702 (100% - 135% of FPL) will lose the most potentially.
- This group would lose all of the same benefits as the two groups above, plus they will lose medical benefit copays and deductibles for inpatient and outpatient services. This will mean: Loss of inpatient deductible of $1,156 for each hospitalization; Loss of 20% of all inpatient charges; Loss of outpatient deductible of $140 and 20% of all outpatient charges.
- Potential maximum effect as high as $5,510 directly out-of-pocket annually, plus all inpatient, outpatient and drug copays.
- Federal Poverty Level

“All 40,000 will lose the following benefits:
- $99.90 per month in Medicare B premium; Up to $31.18 per month for the Part D benchmark premium in addition to annual deductibles and reduced drug copays; and, if donut hole is reached, would be responsible for 50% to 86% of total out-of-pocket costs ranging from $2,930-$4,700 depending on the use of brand or generic drugs.

Prescription Drug Assistance for Certain People over 62 and People with Disabilities:

Approximately 5,000 low-income older adults (over age 62) and people with disabilities who do not have Medicare will lose all assistance they currently receive to afford their prescription medications through the Drugs for the Elderly (DEL) program. These are individuals with serious health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and Lou Gehrig’s Disease.

Please Let Your Elected Representatives Know

- Maine’s low-income seniors are already struggling to pay for food, heat, housing and health care. These cuts go into effect, seniors will stop taking their medications, potentially leading to serious health consequences—costing us all more in the end. These programs provide a critical health safety net for Maine’s most vulnerable seniors. These cuts are penny wise and pound foolish and should be rejected! We need your help now! Contact your own Senator and Representative and ask them to vote against these cuts!
- Don’t stand by while your critically important benefits or those of a neighbor or friend are at risk of being lost.

We’d especially like people who will be affected by the cuts or their family members or friends to call or email members of the Appropriations Committee. Please tell your personal story or the story of someone you know, if at all possible.

Calls should be made to legisla tor’s listed cell or home phones and weekends and evenings are good times to call, because they’re home. The calls made to legislative offices will only go to voicemail or will be answered by a clerk. The caller will not speak to the representative. If communicating by email, it is better to not send broadcast emails to all committee members, but instead, send one at a time and try to personalize them.

Here is a link to find your legislator by town:

If you don’t use the Internet and want assistance finding your legislator, call Eileen Whynot, Director of Community Relations, at 207-396-6512 or 800-427-7411, ext 512.

continued on page 12
Mission driven ~ donor supported

Message from Leadership

Thanks to our caring volunteers, donors and staff, we were able to offer critical services and successful solutions to a record breaking 24,600 older adults in 2011. We couldn’t have done it without the generosity of our supporters in the community, both with volunteer time and donations. We continue to use technology, innovative thinking and partnerships to reach a growing population of older adults in Southern Maine. Knowing that health and well being are directly linked to longevity and quality of life, we have expanded our relationship with healthcare providers in 2011. We believe SMAA can play an important role in helping older adults and their caregivers with services to support their health. As you read this report, you will see that SMAA has focused on the needs of older adults.

Despite the difficult economic climate, we received $634,926 from more than 1,204 donors for critical operating support. We welcomed 506 new donors and 110 donors made major gifts of $1,000 or more. With flat or declining state and federal funding, this financial support goes a long ways toward helping us meet our mission.

We are most grateful to the leadership given by our volunteers on the SMAA Board of Directors and Advisory Council, and the extremely dedicated and hardworking SMAA staff and volunteers who made these accomplishments possible. It was a great pleasure to work with all of them in 2011.

254 donors gave $120,390 for Meals on Wheels—that’s 18,352 meals delivered!

Community Partnerships

- SMAA Resource Specialists worked closely with the physicians and nurses of Intermed, Maine Medical Center’s Physician Health Organization and MaineHealth to link patients with important health, social and financial benefits.

- SMAA collaborated with the Good Shepherd Food Bank, York County Shelters, Project Seed, Wayside Food Rescue, University of Maine Cooperative Extension and a number of food pantries to provide 1,280 low-income older adults with a total of 295,950 pounds of groceries.

- More than 30 children in grades 4-6 from the City of Saco’s summer rec program teamed up with Truslow Adult Day Center to work in groups and one-on-one with participants. Activities included games, crafts and athletic fun.

- CATCH Healthy Habits, a program for better health for adults age 50+ and older, was awarded to SMAA in 2011—one of 18 funded nationally by the OASIS Institute, a national education organization, with support from the WellPoint Foundation. Local partners include the Boys & Girls Club and elementary schools in Westbrook, South Portland and Portland.

- Martin’s Point Health Care was the $15,000 Platinum Sponsor for Maine Senior Games for the 4th year.

- 477 low-income seniors received supportive services and housing in partnership with the cities of Westbrook and Portland.

Volunteers made it possible for

- 179,194 meals to be delivered to 1,666 households
- 154 people to get essential groceries or manage limited household finances
- 5,471 people to be guided through complex health insurance decisions including Medicare.

This year 575 volunteers of all ages helped SMAA deliver services to assist people over age 60 and their family caregivers. They served over 37,943 hours, the equivalent of 16 full-time employees.

In addition, 269 SMAA RSVP volunteers provided service in their communities through other non-profit and healthcare organizations. They served over 37,400 hours, the equivalent of 16 full-time employees.

Discovering Solutions for Aging and Independence

Assisting Family Caregivers

Savvy Caregiver Classes helped families develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to make taking care of a person with dementia easier. In 2011, Savvy Caregiver II was launched to assist caregivers as dementia progresses and their needs as caregivers change.

3,207 family caregivers talked with one of our staff or attended caregiving classes, which helped countless family members gain information and develop coping skills, up 54% from 2010.

Enhanced Services in the Community

SMAA works toward streamlining access to services for people with disabilities and older adults alike. In order to help achieve this, SMAA Resource Specialists visit community sites through Wayside Food Programs, the IRIS Network, Goodwill, ALPHA One, various churches and other organizations in order to offer face-to-face assistance.

Through its “As You Like It” program, the Bonanzza restaurant, Me & Dine, St. Joseph’s College, Maine Medical Center and York Hospital served 20,032 meals, up 83% from 2010. Customers choose from a variety of menu items, where and when they want to eat out and for a suggested donation.

“I have learned how to get my self-esteem back and to do more positive thinking. The (Living Well) workshop has made me think that I can do anything in life.” Cindy M.

Working closely with adult education departments, primary care practices, immigrant community leaders and the YNCA, twice as many (197) people with multiple chronic health conditions learned new skills by attending “Living Well for Better Health” workshops. 122 people learned to reduce their risk of falling through “A Matter of Balance” classes.

21 new volunteer Medicare Advocates were trained in 2011 bringing the number of active health insurance counseling volunteers to 65. This cadre of volunteers and our staff made it possible to provide 7,508 health insurance selections this year.

Our Money Minders volunteers helped 71 low-income households establish a monthly budget and accurately pay their bills on time. Bank overdraft fees were avoided and volunteers made referrals for benefits such as food assistance, tax refund rebates, and health insurance counseling to maximize income and to free up funds to pay for other needs whenever possible.

Truslow Adult Day Center in Saco

64 families benefited from 34,363 enriching hours of therapeutic activities for a cognitively or physically impaired relative.

“CF Transportation Services, 2001 Saco Boulevard, Saco, Maine 04072, (207) 898-1917, offers transportation for doctor’s appointments and other essential activities.”

Milestones

The circulation for “Senior News” increased from 19,500 to 22,000 and the number of contributing volunteer writers topped 861.

24% of Maine Senior Games athletes were new competitors, up from 17% in 2010. 428 athletes competed in one or more events for a total of 846 events. In 2011, Casco Bay Bowlers went 19-14-6.

SMAA’s total revenue was $5,197,010.

26% of total revenue came from grants and donations, 22% from other non-profit organizations and 13% from municipal and state funding.

$180,040 was the $15,000 Platinum Sponsor for Maine Senior Games for the 4th year.

2011

136 U.S. Route One, Scarborough, Maine 04074

(207) 796-6300 (800) 427-7411 www.smooa.org
Governor’s Proposed Cuts continued from page 10

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All profits go to support independent living programs for people with disabilities

The Scoop on Medicare Advantage Plans

Reconsidering? You have until February 14th to switch back.

By Stan Cohen, Volunteer Medicare Advocate Southern Maine Agency on Aging

January 1st through February 14th each year marks the period when a Medicare beneficiary can reconsider their choice of a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan and switch back to Original Medicare and chose a Medicare D plan and supplement to replace the MA plan. For those of you who may be considering such a switch, Senior News contributing author Stan Cohen has put together a review of Medicare Advantage as you contemplate a possible switch.

Medicare Advantage is an option that appeals to some Medicare beneficiaries because of low premiums (some have no premium), because most of them also have drug coverage and because they require only one ID card (compared to traditional Medicare where you may need 3 cards: the Medicare card; a Medicare Supplement card; and a Part D plan card). For some seniors, Medicare Advantage is a reasonable alternative. But as the saying goes, the "mischief is in the details.

There are five companies that offer several MA plans this year in Maine. Most agents who sell these plans are ethical representatives who are selling a legitimate product. On the other hand, they may not be inclined or have the time to fill you in on the "small print" –the details that could cost you money later on. For example, there are co-pays with most Medicare Advantage plans that you will not incur with traditional Medicare supplemented with a Medigap plan. One of the biggest of these MA co-pays is for hospitalization as an inpatient. In most Maine counties, that co-pay ranges from $100 to $250 per day for each of the first six, seven or ten days, depending on the plan. And those co-pays may apply to each benefit period of 60 days. To be fair, each MA plan has a maximum, annual out-of-pocket amount. These caps range from $3,400 to $6,700.

There are, however, a number of other MA co-pays that are not usually applicable in traditional Medicare supplemented with a Medigap plan. Here are some of them with typical co-pay amounts: Durable Medical Equipment - 20%; Out-patient surgical services-$200; Diagnostic tests - 20%; Specialist - $35; and the long list goes on.

Of course, the open enrollment for MA plans is now over (until next fall). Still, those who are new to Medicare in 2012 have a seven month window to sign up, and they will undoubtedly receive lots of marketing mail from companies who want their business. So I recommend that anyone who is considering an MA plan ask these questions:

1. Are all of your drugs on the plan’s list of covered drugs (the formulary)?
2. Are there any co-pay categories that are not included in computing the annual cap?
3. Is there a co-pay for Part B drugs (e.g. meds administered in the doctor office)?
4. If you need a skilled nursing facility (like a rehab hospital) will there be a co-pay?
5. Is your physician in the plan’s network of providers? If the answer is yes, check with your doctor’s office to be sure.
6. What coverage, if any, will be provided if you go out-of-state?
7. Will the plan provide you with a written "summary of benefits" before you enroll?

Keep in mind that the plans are not permitted to call you or visit you unless you ask them to. Be diligent. It’s your money.

Remember, if you are considering a switch to Original Medicare, (with a Medicare prescription drug plan and supplement), you must do so by February 14th. If you have any questions about your situation, please call SMAA at 207-396-6500 or 800-827-7411.

Correction………..

Boston Museum of Art

Unfortunately, Senior News received incorrect information from several sources and did not question its validity. The truth is only students who are Maine residents are admitted to the Boston Museum of Art free of charge. We are very sorry for the confusion and appreciate readers letting us know of the error.

—Editor
Village School’s Kindness Campaign Extends to Meals on Wheels at Christmas

Kindergarten and first grade students at the Village School in Gorham made “Hugs to You” cards for 120 Meals on Wheels recipients from Gorham, Westbrook and Portland. The cards were delivered on Christmas Day by volunteers from the Portland Rotary Club, which marked 33 years of delivering meals to seniors alone on Christmas. In all, 231 holiday ham dinners were delivered in York and Cumberland counties by volunteers organized by the Southern Maine Agency on Aging.

To sign up for Meals on Wheels or to volunteer, call 207-396-6583 or 1-800-400-6325.

Village School’s Kindness Campaign Extends to Meals on Wheels at Christmas

GETTING BETTER. GOING HOME.

Call for a tour!

Skilled Medical Care • RNs 24/7 • Rehab Therapists

A meal, and so much more.

“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

Donate or Volunteer—Either Way, YOU Deliver!

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

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LOOSE DENTURES?

New FDA Clearance for State of the Art

Implants at 1/3 the Cost!

Now you can have what you crave!

Visit Falmouth Dental Arts in the morning, have the “Mini-Implant System” placed in less than two hours, then go out and enjoy your favorite lunch.

What are MDI Implants?
The MDI System consists of a miniature implant that acts like the root of your tooth and the retaining fixture that is incorporated into the base of your denture. The head of the implant is shaped like a ball, and the retaining fixture acts like a socket that contains a rubber O-ring. The O-ring snaps over the ball when the denture is seated and holds the denture at a predetermined level of force. When seated, the denture gently rests on the gum tissue. The implant fixture allows for micro-mobility while withstanding natural lifting forces.

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Gorham House
information@gorhamhouse.com

Call for a tour!
What Your Dollars Do
Supporting Savvy Caregiver

What do you do when a family member is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or another dementia? It’s frightening and for many people, denial is the road most taken. But when you can no longer deny the effects of the disease on your spouse, mother, father or close friend, there is another path.

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging offers free Savvy Caregiver classes, which help you understand and meet the challenges you’ll be facing. A 12-hour investment of your time returns not only the tools you can use to become a better caregiver, but also a greater sense of patience, an acceptance of the loss you’re experiencing, and a more fulfilling relationship even as the disease progresses.

Fortunately for us, The Simmons Foundation, the Sam L. Cohen Foundation, and the Huntington Common Charitable Fund are all supporting the Southern Maine Agency on Aging and for many people, denial is the road most taken. But when you can no longer deny the effects of the disease on your spouse, mother, father or close friend, there is another path.

For Ann O’Sullivan, a Family Caregiver Specialist, Savvy Caregiver is training for a difficult journey. “You wouldn’t run a marathon without training. That’s what this is. Savvy Caregiver helps a caregiver stay healthier and the person with dementia stay safe and content.”

Savvy Caregiver helps a caregiver meet those challenges by investing in this important work. You meet those challenges by investing in this important work. You can make a planned gift to the Southern Maine Agency on Aging in the following ways:

- A bequest through your will or trust
- Charitable gift annuities
- Stock gifts
- Real estate and other gifts of property
- Beneficiary arrangements:
  - Life insurance
  - Pension plans
  - IRAs
  - Annuities

The Legacy Society welcomes individuals who make outright gifts to SMAA’s endowment of $2,000 or more and/or make provisions for SMAA in their wills or through life income gifts or charitable trusts of any amount. To find out how to become a Legacy Society member, call Peg Brown, Director of Development at 207-396-6500 mbrown@maaa.org. Or you can visit www.maaa.org/planned_giving.php to learn more.
Senior Moments
By Hunter Howe

Old Boring Bob

September had slipped into early October. As I sauntered around Fort Williams one dreary and gray, overcast morning, I bumped into my good friend Bob. He sat on his favorite bench, appearing deep in thought. On closer look, he seemed down, even disturbed.

“Everything OK?” I asked. Bob patted the bench, a gesture to sit. He peered out toward Cushing Island, his brow wrinkled, eyes narrowed.

“At a year ago, my wife said that as we grow older, people listen to us less. Nonsense, I told her. I’ve been to town a few times, been around you know. I have a lot to say. I waved her off with a dismissive chuckle.” I slapped Bob on the shoulder. “Only one person more interesting than you and that’s me.” I laughed, he didn’t. “So why the Gloomy Gus face?”

He pressed his lips together and shook his head. “She was right. I’ve become conversationally impaired. I’m boring others into submission.”

“Oh seniors?” I said.

“Nope, mainly people younger than me. Maybe it’s just a generation gap and I’m overreacting.”

Because I’m a swell amateur psychologist, I didn’t respond right away. I wondered if he was having a psychological attack. I’ve turned 65 and bingo, I’m a massive Boston baked beans gas attack. Beer breath, barbarian body odor, or feet shuffling. You’d think I had stale fart gas spewing into a fresh dog turd, stunk.

Bob banged his fist against the bench. “Have I suddenly become a sad sack senior muttering, babbling and rambling incoherently? Maybe it’s my Old Spice and I smell like my grandfather did. That’s it, I’ll upgrade to Polo, whiten my teeth, wear Ray-Ban sunglasses and toss the flannel shirts.”

“Not the flannels, you’ll lose the LL Bean modeling job, I said.” Another turd.

“Know something about the art of conversation,” he said, “about being a good listener. Remember the old adage, ‘A bore talks mostly in the first person, a gossip in the third and a good conversationalist in the second.’ What do you think?”

“You’re possibly a victim of age conversation discrimination.”

“Is that some kind of social disease? Sounds like a subject for Dr. Phil’s television show. Hey, what’s the remedy? Pop a pill, join the Hair Club for Men or converse with my imaginary pal Bert.”

“Other seniors?” I said.

“Nothing overt. But, I’ve noticed a massive Boston baked beans gas attack and my friends quiet with each other. I thought about what he’d said. Not prone to exaggeration, his comments didn’t make sense to me. I’ve admired his successful career, his pursuit of knowledge, his acute powers of observation, his thirst for reading, his well-traveled portfolio and his bit of wit. Likeable, he was hardly a boring person.

Bob turned towards me. “Years back, I’d walk into a room, put my hand out and engage in meaningful conversation.”

“Kind of like a politician, without the meaningful part,” I said. My second attempt at humor, like stepping into a fresh dog turd, stunk. Bob turned towards me. “Years back, I’d walk into a room, put my hand out and engage in meaningful conversation.”

“I know something about the art of conversation,” he said, “about being a good listener. Remember the old adage, ‘A bore talks mostly in the first person, a gossip in the third and a good conversationalist in the second.’ What do you think?”

“You’re possibly a victim of age conversation discrimination.”

“Is that some kind of social disease? Sounds like a subject for Dr. Phil’s television show. Hey, what’s the remedy? Pop a pill, join the Hair Club for Men or converse with my imaginary pal Bert.”

“Bob, another friend told me once that not every realization we have is worth a lot of time and thought; sometimes, it’s a matter of accepting reality, even in those times when our egos are bouncing along the ground like deflated balloons. However, I suppose it’s a personal judgment.”

He nodded, stood, started to walk away, then hesitated. “Thanks for listening.”

I wonder how many other seniors feel the same frustration as Bob, something to say, few listening. Selective extroverts turned into tentative introverts with guarded tongues. As the world piles things on, we struggle in life to think well of ourselves, for recognition. I wonder if more seniors need to speak up like my friend and come out of the age conversation discrimination closet.

I remembered what Maine writer Holman Day wrote, “But the listener must be wise to understand.”

I HEAR YOU, Bob.

Note: We’re interested in your thoughts regarding “Bob’s” feelings concerning age conversation discrimination. All responses will be held in strict confidence. If we get enough feedback, we’ll publish an overall generic composite of reader’s input. Thank you.

Readers may contact Hunter at grayowl@maine.rr.com
Living Well for Better Health
Re-imagine your life.

Got something you want to change about the way you manage your health? Tired of being tired, anxious or in pain?

Try something new. Learn about handling pain and fatigue, eating well, fun ways to get active, and tips for talking with your doctor and family. Design a personal action plan.

Developed at Stanford University, this safe, supportive, workshop is open to adults of all ages. Caregivers also welcome to attend. 

Workshops - Winter 2012

Mondays, 9-11:30am, January 30 - March 12 (no class February 20) at Gorham Parks & Rec, 75 South St., Gorham

Wednesdays, 9:30am-12 noon, January 25 - February 29 at MMC Family Medicine, 1300 Falmouth Road, Falmouth

Fridays, 12:30-3pm, January 27 - March 8, Meetinghouse Village, 143 Rogers Road, Kittery

Thursdays, 1-3:30pm, February 2 - March 8, Harbor Terrace, 284 Danforth Street, Portland

Tuesdays, February 7 - March 13, 9:30am-Noon, Nason Community Center, 457 Main Street, Springvale

Fridays, February 16 - April 14, 2:30-5pm, Portland YMCA, 70 Forrest Avenue, Portland. Call 874-1111

Fridays, March 2 - April 6, 1-3:30pm, Martin’s Point Health Education Center, 331 Veranda St., Portland

M eetings are held at 6:30 pm at 800 Main Street in South Portland. The programs include general sharing/socializing and a variety of educational speakers. Dr. Ann Babbitt is the medical advisor and periodically attends meetings. Mary Menard, LADC is the facilitator. Please call Cindy King at 828-1133 if you have any questions. If you need transportation, we may be able to help.

February 7, 2012 “Protect your Hands” with Jenny Shubert P.T. Cht

Sea Coast Hand Therapy

March 6, 2012 “Meeting your Nutritional Needs with Celiac” with Kay Mullin, RD, LD, CDE

April 3, 2012 “Programs the Cancer Community has to Offer” with Amy Anderson, Outreach Coordinator.

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A Matter of Balance

Are you concerned about falling?
Do you restrict your activities because you are concerned?
Are you interested in improving your balance, flexibility and strength?
Are you age 60 or older, ambulatory and able to problem-solve?

A Matter of Balance is a nationally recognized program designed to help you manage falls and increase your activity levels. The workshops are given in two-hour sessions once a week for eight weeks.

You will learn to:
• View falls and fear of falls as controllable
• Set realistic goals for increasing activity
• Make changes to reduce falls at home
• Exercise to increase strength and balance

Winter 2012 Class Schedule

Mondays, 2-4pm January 16 - March 17, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, 136 U.S. Route One, Scarborough

Tuesdays, 1-3pm February 28 - April 10, Casco Bay YMCA, 14 Old South Freeport Road, Freeport. For registration, call 207-865-9600.

Wednesday, 1-3pm March 21 - May 9, MaineHealth LRC, Falmouth Classroom, 5 Bucknam Road, Falmouth

Thursdays, 10am-Noon February 23 - April 12, Congregation Sharey Tphiiloh, 76 Noyes St., Portland

Call or email for more information or to register: Jessica LeBlanc at 207-396-6583 or 1-800-400-6325, jleblanc@smaaa.org

Do you Suffer from Pain?

Black Bear Medical at 275 Marginal Way in Portland will be hosting two open houses to demonstrate the LaserTouchOne, a revolutionary device for pain relief. Ken Perkins, PT, renowned orthotist and prosthetist, will personally introduce and demonstrate the benefits of this breakthrough technology for pain relief. Please join us Jan 11th 1pm-5pm or Feb 29th 1pm-5pm. Don’t want to wait or can’t make the open house dates? Contact Michael Chapman (207) 400-8028 to schedule a free demo and for more information.

Computers for Seniors

Don’t be afraid of your computer! This class is geared for folks that don’t know their way around the computer. Learn the basics of computers, how to use email and the Internet. Find out about Facebook and Skype. This class allows time to practice. No prior computer experience necessary.

Tuesday & Thursdays, 2:15-4:15
Offered twice: January 17 to February 9 OR March 13 to April 5
Cost is $57 for Portland residents, $67 for non-residents. You can register online, walk-in, call 207-775-0432 or mail-in.

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Available from MetLife Bank, it’s a new Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) that may save the average homeowner age 62 or older thousands of dollars. It significantly reduces your up-front costs as compared to our other HECM reverse mortgages.

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Steve Eastman
MetLife Bank Reverse Mortgage Consultant
Local: 207-657-2459
Toll Free: 800-416-4748
Twin Sisters
continued from page 1

“We don’t have a script. We just turn the camera on and we start babbling,” said Sawyer, who originally went by the stage name Miss Donna but switched to Grammie Donna following the birth of her first grandson during the show’s second season.

Sawyer and Senechal, known to viewers as Miss Dianne, had no experience on either side of the camera when they launched their program. They came across as stiff and serious in their first few shows. That changed once they allowed the goofiness they normally show to come familiar faces to viewers of their true personalities to the screen.

"From then on, we were comedians.” Sawyer said. “It was just a mess.”

But after the station manager, Patrick Bonsant, prodded Senechal to produce a program. Sawyer recalled of the hours they spent filming that first episode on putting together a soil recipe. “We had no idea what we were doing. It was just a mess.”

However, the combination of the sisters’ unscripted patter and the delightful way in which they play off each other while imparting useful information in a straightforward manner. “They totally defy that stereotype of the senior citizen passively sitting in a rocking chair,” he said. “They helped us create a garden in front of our television studio in Hollis. We were plenty sore at the end of the day, but they seemed like they were ready for more.”

Editor’s Note: To watch past episodes of Garden Thyme, see www.src-tv.org or tune in at 10:00 AM or 8:00 PM every day on Saco River TV Channel 2.

When faced with the challenges of memory loss, choices are critical in the journey of caring for your loved one.

At Fallbrook Woods - Maine’s leading memory care community - we are committed to providing choices that honor the self-expression, rituals, and routines that are important to each individual in need of memory support.

To experience life-enriching moments filled with choices in a secure environment, call Janet at 207-878-0788.
The crew was put on combat duty. “No time was lost getting us where we needed to be. That freedom and the Flag may live. And in some way I want to feel that I am doing service real.”

On one run we were taking off from the short runway, and I was in my usual position in the nose, looking out in front of us when I saw this farmer plowing the land. When I saw him jump off his tractor and run, I knew we were in trouble. Sure enough, one wheel hit the tractor sending us out of control into a bunch of trees at the end of the runway. Our speed was around 80 miles per hour and it seemed like forever before the plane came to a stop. Not being built to fly through trees, the plane broke in half. I smelled the plane burning. When the fire reached the .50 caliber ammunition, all Hell broke loose, bullets flying in all directions.” Everyone got out. But the waist gunner, burned badly and thrown from the plane, spent the rest of the war in a hospital. With time of the essence, the crew flew the next day. “At 19-years old, I did not consider the profound effects of waging war. All I considered was the threat being made to my country. With these thoughts, I was ready to place my fate in the hands of God and put life at risk.”

Then there was the thrill of adventures over Germany, dodging flak and enemy planes. Thinking like most flyers, surely the Germans can’t shoot us all down, I am going to be the ONE to finish my missions.” In August 1944 faced with his first mission, Dean wondered who would survive, if anyone.

In Part II, we will find ourselves flying in the tight confines of a B-17 over the flak-filled skies of Hitler’s Europe. Through Dean’s eyes we will be experiencing the sheer bedlam of his 20 missions—12 as a bombardier and eight as a navigator.

Readers may contact Hunter at grayowl@maine.rr.com

Free Assistance from Southern Maine Agency on Aging
Benefits Specialists in Biddeford, Westbrook, and Windham

Are you 60 or older, or under 60 and disabled and struggling to get by on your income? You may be eligible for a range of services.

Biddeford: Linda Sprague Lambert is available Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at the McArthur Library. Call Linda directly at 776-4759 for an appointment.

Westbrook: Owen O’Donnell is available Wednesday at the Westbrook Community Center on Bridge Street. Call the Agency at 396-6500 for an appointment.

Windham: Owen O’Donnell is available Tuesday at Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 919 Roosevelt Trail. Call the Agency at 396-6500 an appointment.

This service supported by Community Block Development Grants from the City of Biddeford and Cumberland County.

tax / rent rebate • fuel assistance • prescription drug assistance
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Edgar A. Guest wrote on the call to duty: “At some post where my work will I must with courage do my bit; Some portion of myself I’d give That freedom and the Flag may live. And in some way I want to feel That I am doing service real.”

As a working mom, I want to give my best to my family and my job. So good health is a top priority. That’s why I go to Martin’s Point for my health care. Even with my busy schedule, I can get in at the times that work for me. They accept all major health insurance plans and I receive great care with genuine concern for my well-being. Isn’t that what we all want?
Chronic Pain Support Group Welcomes New Members

By Ernie Merritt, Facilitator

The Southern Maine Chronic Pain Support Group was founded in 1993 and meets on the first Thursday of every month from 6-7:30 PM and from 11-12:30 PM on the third Thursday of every month in Ocean Park. The group is sponsored by The Arthritis Foundation www.arthritis.org, and is a member of the American Chronic Pain Association www.theacpa.org. At this point, the group seeks new members in order to make the experience beneficial for all and to keep the all-volunteer, nonprofit group going. The group offers support, coping skills, empathy and understanding. Family and friends are welcome to attend. Any help offered by the group is supplemental to everyone’s own medical providers. What does the group offer you?

• an opportunity to talk with others who have an understanding of chronic pain
• a community of supportive people
• help learning to cope with pain

The group supports and guides you to

• learn more about your condition
• accept your pain and move toward living life to its fullest
• earn how to use coping and pain management skills
• reclaim control of your life

The group meets in the hospitality room at The Pines, 20 Manor Street, Old Orchard Beach. For more information, call Evelyn (207) 937-5020 or Jane (207) 934-4189 or send an email to supportgroup@gwi.net or visit www.painsupportgroup.org.

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Maine Seniors Must Plan for Long-term Care

Governor LePage’s Proposed Cuts will Affect Many

By Matthew R. Dubois, Esq

Statistics released a few months ago show that while Maine incomes and household net worth are below national averages, the cost of long-term care here, both in-home and in-facility, is substantially higher. The national average annual cost of care in assisted living is $39,135 and in a nursing facility $77,745. In Maine that same annual cost of care in assisted living is $55,500 in assisted living and $192,747 in a nursing facility.

As long-term care costs rise, it all seems unaffordable to the average middle income Maine family. While no one wants to need long-term care, most will benefit from it and expect to receive it at some time in their lives. Long-term care, both at home and facility based, have become part of how seniors recover, thrive and survive following a medical crisis, due to aging-related frailty and often a multitude of conditions and diseases.

Long-term care insurance can help offset these costs, if you had the foresight and budget to afford it. For most Maine seniors, private long-term care insurance was not part of their retirement plan, and they have for many years been using up their retirement savings, even the equity in their home, to pay for long-term care. Mainer’s are notoriously self-sufficient and prefer to pay their own way—even when poverty results. When private funds run out, often while paying for just the first spouse who needs care, many rely on MaineCare long-term care (which leverages federal Medicaid dollars).

Unfortunately, current proposals being put forward by Governor LePage and other Maine lawmakers include substantial cuts to MaineCare programs including those that pay for assisted living and boarding home coverage. In addition, these proposals included cuts to supportive services including Drugs for the Elderly, Fund for a Healthy Maine, Medicare Savings Program, the “wrap” for Medicare Part D, elimination of adult family homes as well as many “optional” Medicaid funded services.

What can Maine seniors do to ensure they will be able to get and pay for care? The key to protecting yourself, your spouse, your home and your retirement savings is to plan ahead. Most people think that if they are prudent spenders, if they save, if they set aside a nest egg, they will be able to pay. However at over $100K per year for nursing home care, most will quickly run out of funds.

As you approach retirement you should view meeting with knowledgeable aging professionals as an investment in your future health and a protection for your family, your home and your estate. By meeting with an attorney familiar with aging issues, you can develop a health and long-term care plan in conjunction with your estate plan. Since long-term care is one of the biggest potential expenses you face in life, this is a smart investment in healthy aging. Similarly, meeting with insurance, investment, accountant and care management professionals can help you find ways to afford long-term care and reduce overall health and long-term care expenditures when they will be needed.

By developing a legal and long-term care strategy with your attorney, you will better understand how to use the investments and equity you have to pay for better care. You can plan ahead to pay for care, to protect a spouse or disabled child and to minimize the impact of gifts to charity or to children if you some day need to apply for MaineCare assistance. By planning ahead you can make investments and upgrades that will allow you to receive in-home care for a longer time, convert property to create income for you and your spouse, maximize your income to pay for care and work with other family members to protect family property.

Nothing you read here or elsewhere substitutes for legal advice from an attorney knowledgeable about the funding of long-term care faced by seniors—be sure to start asking your attorney these questions.

SOURCE: Genworth Financial, Inc.

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CATCH Healthy Habits
Starting in January!

We need your help in getting kids moving again and eating healthier. Consider volunteering for CATCH Healthy Habits, an after-school program that brings teams of adults age 50 plus together with kids to learn about good eating habits and to play active games. CATCH Healthy Habits is an intergenerational project in the greater Portland area offered by the OASIS Institute and SMAA’s volunteer placement program RSVP.

We need volunteers for the following program locations:
- Westbrook at Canal Elementary School
- South Portland at Skillin Elementary School and Redbank Community Center

There are lots of ways to get involved. You can work directly with the children in grades K-5 by leading fun, active games, sharing healthy snacks and teaching about good food choices. Or, you can help in other ways, like helping to organize sessions, preparing snacks, taking pictures, etc. Sessions meet once a week for an hour and training is provided.

To learn more, contact Sharon Schulberger at 207-652-23.
Help children develop healthier lifestyles and make positive changes that will help you, too. Contact us today!

The Tip of the Iceberg

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

Cumberland County
- A Portland public school is looking for a volunteer to tutor a gifted young student in advanced mathematics and algebra.
- If winter driving is not a problem for you, Meals on Wheels provides routes in the Elizabeth area delivering meals.

The time commitment is about two hours one day a week. Volunteers are not asked to drive in snow storms and are paid 42 cents a mile.

- Wanted: Mentors to act as culture guides for an adult non-native speaker. Also needed is a volunteer to help “at risk” youth in an alternative school setting.
- Attention knitters: We have an opportunity to knit hats and mittens at home for elementary school children and/or to teach elementary school children how to knit.
- The American Red Cross has a variety of needs-volunteering at a local center or helping with local blood drives.

Please call or email me, Priscilla Greene, at 207-652-1 or 1-800-427-7411 Ext. 521, or pgreen@smaaa.org, and we can discuss these and the many other ways you and others can have a great year ahead.

York County
- Do you like to read books aloud to young children? Opportunities to do so exist in children’s centers in Kittery, Sanford and Biddeford.
- A nonprofit bookstore that benefits Home Health and Visiting Nurses of Southern Maine needs additional volunteers to help out.
- Southern Maine Agency on Aging’s Truslow Adult Day Center in Saco needs greeters, a lunchtime aide, help with various activities and even a volunteer manicurist. Call RSVP for more information.

- Meals on Wheels drivers are needed on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays or Fridays. The time commitment is about two hours.
- A number of nursing homes and assisted living centers are looking for volunteers to help with activities or visit residents.

To learn more about these and many other volunteer opportunities, please call or email me, Debbie Kasper at 207-637-1590, or kmurray@smaaa.org, and we can arrange interviews.

Congratulations, Bill!

New Volunteers

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

Michelle Andreoli
Jessica Aspiras
Eric Booker
Stacey Golder
Peter Hutchinson
Ruth Lathrop
Mark Longarini
Donna Perry
Ann Phoebe Russell
Work Opportunities participants, Sanford

New RSVP Stations

CATCH Healthy Habits
Child Care Services of York County
John F. Kennedy School
Saccarappa Elementary School
Mission Driven
A Spotlight on Carrie Yardley

By Monika Pardon
AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer

Carrie Yardley has become an invaluable volunteer and member of the Southern Maine Agency on Aging family. She came to us as a volunteer through the AARP Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. When I first met her, she was glued to a computer at the main office in Scarborough. In talking with Carrie, I have discovered that she has a quiet wit. She is a very interesting, funny, dynamic, talented and professional person.

Carrie has New England roots. She grew up in New Hampshire, and she attended Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Later she went on to law school at Boston University. She moved to Minnesota for her husband’s work and eventually they returned to New England and settled in Maine.

Carrie started her professional life working as a lawyer until ten years ago, when she opened her own catering business. After running her business, she decided to volunteer with AARP as a tax consultant for the 2010 tax season. AARP placed her at SMAA to work on Friday mornings as a tax counselor.

During the last tax season Carrie got to know the Agency, met employees and some older adults who came to SMAA. Within SMAA, she found a place where her talents are not only utilized but valued. She found she likes older people, SMAA workers and the Agency’s mission, which is “...to improve the physical, social, emotional and economic well-being of older adults living in southern Maine.” Carrie realizes that one of the best ways to understand the issues seniors face is to work with them on a one-on-one basis.

When her volunteer service with AARP came to a close, Carrie stayed on as a SMAA volunteer, working with the Development office and joining SMAA’s Development Committee. She helps to identify people who may be interested in furthering SMAA’s mission through their financial support. Equally important, she spends time talking to existing donors to thank them and to find out what they value about SMAA.

Carrie has a personal goal to volunteer ten hours per week and generally, she achieves this goal. She comes in and works diligently, helping the Agency and the senior community of southern Maine. Currently Carrie is working on an event for donors to help raise funds for Meals on Wheels.

Carrie believes in hard work and helping others and she does so with grace and humor. She told me one thing that rings true for everyone at any age: ‘we have to “…have a good sense of humor to deal with life.” With the tenacious commitment she has for seniors and the Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Carrie is an invaluable member of the SMAA family of volunteers.

Celebrating Life

SolAmor Hospice focuses on improving the quality of life for patients diagnosed with a life-limiting illness. Our dedicated staff members help ease pain while providing emotional and spiritual support for patients, families and caregivers.

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27 Forest Falls Drive • Yarmouth, ME 04096 • 207-846-0044
**Recipe for Bone Building**

Susan Gay, Registered Dietician, Nutrition Coordinator, Hannaford

"Eat your vegetables and you’ll grow up to be big and strong!" We’ve all been known to use this line on our children and grandchildren to persuade them to eat, right? Wise advice and true words for all of us to live by! OK, we’re all grown up, but are we strong? Good nutrition is important for sturdy bones and a resilient immune system. Both are key to aging well. Healthy bones are dependent on adequate Calcium and Vitamin D and can help avoid falls and broken bones. The requirement for seniors is three servings of Vitamin D fortified low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt daily. Also look for fortified fruit juices, cereals, and fatty fish like salmon and tuna. Additionally, milk and yogurt contain important nutrients like protein, phosphorus and potassium.

Taking a calcium supplement? Don’t forget Vitamin D to help calcium absorption. The current recommendation for D is 600 IUs over 60 years old and 800 IUs over 70; and more may be needed. Some research is showing that adequate Vitamin D levels help support our immune system, especially important during the winter months here in Maine! Despite our body’s ability to make Vitamin D when exposed to the sun, it’s often not enough because of our distance from the sun, as well as the limited time spent outdoors. If you haven’t already, ask your physician to check your Vitamin D level to determine if you need additional supplementation. Try this easy to make, delightful soup from Cabot cheese, and I guarantee no one will have to convince you to eat your dinner!

**Creamy Cauliflower Soup**

cooking spray
1 cup chopped onion
1 medium head cauliflower, roughly chopped
2 1/2 cups low-salt chicken broth
1/2 cup fat-free milk
2 oz Cabot 50% Reduced Fat Cheddar, grated
2 tbsp chopped fresh dill (optional)
pepper to taste

1. Coat a large saucepan with cooking spray; add onion and sauté over medium heat until tender (about 3 minutes). Add cauliflower and continue cooking 2 additional minutes.
2. Add broth and milk to pan and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes or until cauliflower is very tender.

Affordable Senior Housing At Its Best
Greater Portland’s newest senior housing is located on the banks of the picturesque Presumpscot River in downtown Westbrook near shops, restaurants, banks, the library and a post office.

**Apartments:**
- 31 one-bedroom and 3 two-bedroom units

**Amenities:**
- Laundry room and assigned parking
- Fitness and computer rooms
- A cat is permitted
- Individual storage units
- Part-time resident services coordinator

**Qualifications:**
- 55 years of age or better
- Income limits
  - 1 person: $25,500-$30,600
  - 2 people: $29,150-$34,980
- Rents include heat and hot water
- One bedroom: $678–$814
- Two bedroom: $815–$978

**Applications now being accepted.**

If you—or someone you know—would like to be placed on the interest list, please call Deborah: (207) 654-6656

**Check out our new website!**

www.bridgtonhospital.org