



A Citizen Voice for the
Aging Experience

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ENGAGING NH NEWS

Guest Opinion

It's Time for a Fresh Look at Aging

by Owen Houghton

One of the joys of writing the Age-Wise column is the affirmation that comes from readers. It is always confirming to know there are folks out there who find some benefit in my research and thinking about my own aging journey. To get feedback from a quoted author of renown was a pleasant surprise.

Ashton Applewhite, author, speaker and activist for healthy aging, sent me an email in response to the column on racism and ageism. It was complimentary, for sure, but also timely because I had just participated in a webinar about "reframing ageism."

She observed that she was "digging into the intersection of ageism and ableism, which is where so much of our fear of aging takes root. The movement to end ageism is very much underway," as identified by the good news of the online webinar conversations.

Reframing perceptions of aging promoted the concept that "ageism is bad for your health." Scrutiny of public policies and influencing governments at all

Ageism is bad for your health.

levels has become a goal of a consortium of organizations concerned that Americans hear little about aging as a matter that requires a public response, and even less about ageism — discrimination based on age.

Stereotypes about elders promoted by the media have become evident in the "othering" of COVID-19, with grandparents as targets. Depicting grandma as lonely, ill and cut off from society during the pandemic has Added to the long-standing

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stereotypes of aging.

Clearly we now realize that all ages are impacted by the pandemic. A high percentage of older Americans, perhaps brought up with the "golden rule" to respect others, seem to be very compliant with the rules of the Center for Disease Control, while younger generations seem to be less serious about wearing masks and maintaining six feet of distance.

This new "generation gap" calls for enlightened attitudes and beliefs about older Americans. The reality of longevity has changed and healthy aging is increasing. Advocacy for long-term care with dignity and independence is needed to counter the negative effects on our health beyond the current COVID-19 crisis.

Knowing this, eight leading national organizations, including the American Society for Aging and AARP, came together to change the way we think about aging. The Reframing Aging Initiative is taking a fresh look at legislation and has placed more awareness on elder abuse, fall-prevention, staying strong with balance activities, and end-of-life care.

I even received advice from the webinar as a writer, being encouraged to promote age-friendly topics, and also being warned to monitor the headlines publishers use to highlight such articles. As Applewhite points out, "The movement's time has come in part because Baby Boomers can no longer run and hide from the fact that they are aging."

The research challenged me to examine my own life experiences and review how I feel about my own aging. I wonder what messages I may have absorbed over the

WHO ARE WE?

EngAGING NH is an all-volunteer not-for-profit organization registered with the State of NH. We work to support and promote activities, policies, planning and values that respect and include ALL older adults.

years, and how I think and talk about older people, and how I feel myself about getting older.

While it may be uncomfortable, it is liberating to contemplate my own end of life. My accumulated life experiences have built a special strength to face death with dignity and "complete the life cycle," as expressed by Erik Erikson. The reality that "we don't get out of this life alive" is ultimate wisdom. We are all in the same boat as with the COVID!

As I write this, news of the passing of "Black Panther" Chadwick Boseman punctuates the point and suggests, in the film's dialogue with his father, the Chief: "A man who has not prepared his children for his own death is not a good father."

My family had such preparation from our experience caregiving my wife, Norma. She was stricken by the deadly Alzheimer's disease, for which we Walk in Western New Hampshire on Sept. 26. The reality of the inevitable ending sustained our family to the end of her life. We now celebrate her life with this Purple Flower tribute for all deceased Alzheimer's victims:

"After living for 10 years in the shadow of her Alzheimer's diagnosis, my wife, Norma, was set free from the prison of a

disease without a cure. Our family celebrated her release and recalled all the blessings of a life well-lived, hoping that someday the PURPLE FLOWER would disappear."

Owen R. Houghton, EdD, lives in Jaffrey and is an aging wellness educator who begins this next chapter of life with a deeper appreciation of the meaning of life and death. As a member of Monadnock at Home, he enjoys life in the Monadnock Region. Readers may contact him at no-houghton@myfairpoint.net

NH Updates

DROUGHT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The well drilling and pump industry is busy keeping up with "no water" calls, wells going dry, due to drought impacts. It is estimated that over 1000 residential wells have been impacted based on a phone survey conducted by NHDES. Many companies are reporting several weeks of backlogged requests.

The State of New Hampshire has established an emergency drought assistance initiative for income eligible homeowners who have a residential well that has been impacted by drought.

www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dam/drought/index.htm

FRAUD AND ABUSE RESOURCES

Consumer Protection Complaints

The DOJ has a Consumer Protection Hotline staffed by volunteers weekdays 9am to 3pm. 1-888-468-4454 or (603) 271-3641.

Stayconnectednh.org

Do you, or a loved one, often receive emails, texts, letters, or annoying phone calls? The Stay Connected NH website was

developed by New Hampshire Fast to serve as a trusted and reliable source of information for residents of the state of New Hampshire and their loved ones. Get weekly updates on the latest scams posted on their Blog.

New Hampshire FAST

A multi-disciplinary group of professionals including the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services, the U.S. and NH Departments of Justice, the Alzheimer's Association, Legal Assistance, various financial institutions and others is dedicated to preventing financial exploitation in the Granite State. The mission at FAST is to increase public awareness of financial exploitation with the goal of mitigating risk of exploitation and protecting our state's vulnerable populations.

OUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AT WORK

Protecting Granite State seniors from scams and fraud

In response to alarming reports that show increases in scams targeting social security numbers and older Americans, the House Passed H.R. 2610, or the Fraud And Scam Reduction Act to protect our seniors

The New Hampshire Attorney General's Office reported that scams targeting Social Security numbers have been on the rise across New Hampshire, and a 2019 U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau report showed that older Americans exploited by fraud suffered an average loss of \$34,200.

This new legislation establishes a Senior Scams Prevention Advisory Council, which will create model educational materials to educate employees of retailers, financial-services companies, and wire-transfer

companies on how to identify and prevent scams that affect seniors.

Rep. Chris Pappas

Bipartisan Bill Cosponsored by Senators Hassan, Shaheen to Protect Seniors from Fraud Passes Senate, Heads to President's Desk

The U.S. Senate unanimously passed bipartisan legislation cosponsored by U.S. Senators Maggie Hassan and Jeanne Shaheen to protect seniors from fraud. The bill now heads to the President's desk for signature. The Seniors Fraud Prevention Act will help fight scams designed to rob seniors of their assets by directing the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to create an office to educate seniors about fraud schemes and improve the agency's monitoring and response to fraud complaints. The legislation is led in the Senate by Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

"As scammers seek to take advantage of seniors amid the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever that we help protect seniors from fraudulent schemes," said Senator Hassan. "This bipartisan bill takes critical steps forward in safeguarding seniors' finances by requiring the Federal Trade

We Want You to Know . . .

EngAGING NH promotes citizen leadership and the active involvement of New Hampshire's older adults in the development of communities and public policies that support all individuals as we age. We are a COMPLETELY VOLUNTEER organization with no paid staff, and a limited budget.

We actively partner & work with other NH advocates.

Formal Partnerships

- NH State Independent Living Council
- State Committee on Aging-Vaughan Awards
- Disabilities Rights Center—NH
- NH Cares
- UNH Center for Aging and Community Living
- Oral Health Care Expansion, Children's Alliance of NH
- Self Advocacy Leadership Team (SALT)
- Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

Active Collaborations & Groups:

- Elder Rights Coalition

Other Groups we work with:

- AARP
- NH Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- NH State Committee on Aging
- NAMI
- NH Alliance for Retired Americans
- DD Council
- UNH Institute on Disabilities
- NASW-NH
- Area Committees on Aging
- NH Association of Senior Centers
- Endowment for Health, Alliance on Healthy Aging
- NH Legal Assistance
- Department of Health & Human Services
- ServiceLink

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Commission to further crack down on scammers and educate seniors and their families about scam risks. I am pleased that the House and Senate passed this bill, and I urge the President to swiftly sign it into law."

"Protecting seniors from scams has been a critical issue that predates COVID, but as Americans are particularly vulnerable today due to the hardships of the economic crisis, we need to double down on this priority," said Shaheen. "The Seniors Fraud Prevention Act would help seniors learn how to identify schemes so they're not susceptible to scammers' deceptive tactics, and would bolster efforts to monitor and respond to cases of fraud. I'm encouraged by the overwhelming bipartisan support for this bill in the Senate and urge lawmakers in the House to swiftly follow suit."

The Seniors Fraud Prevention Act will help protect seniors from fraud schemes by creating an office at the Federal Trade Commission with the mission of helping fight scams designed to strip seniors of their assets by educating seniors about fraud schemes and improving the Commission's monitoring and response to fraud complaints. The bill will also require the FTC, the agency responsible for handling consumer complaints, to coordinate with other agencies to monitor for fraud schemes targeting seniors. In addition, the bill would require the FTC to distribute

FYI...

This newsletter is intended as a forum for you to share personal experiences, information and points of view.

In our media driven world of skillful marketing and political spin, we believe that diversity is critical to discernment and therefore the EngAGING NH Board of Directors welcomes all points of view, expressed with civility!

While the opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Board members, our intent is to include material that assists you in forming your own opinions.

To send articles or to add your name to our newsletter mailing list, contact:

engagingnh@gmail.com

information — to seniors, their families, and their caregivers – that explains how to recognize fraud schemes and how to contact law enforcement authorities in the event that a senior is targeted for fraud.

Senators Hassan and Shaheen have worked across the aisle to target fraud. Last year, legislation co-sponsored by Senators Hassan and Shaheen to crack down on robocalls became law. The legislation improves the federal government's ability to find scammers, increases penalties on those caught and requires call authentication and blocking technology to be made available free of charge to consumers. The Senate also passed bipartisan legislation introduced by Senator Hassan to aid victims of identity theft by requiring the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide a single point of contact to help Americans who are victims of identity theft.

requiring the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide a single point of contact to help Americans who are victims of identity theft.

IN-HOME TESTING

COVID-19 testing is available to homebound individuals who are symptomatic. The information has not been posted to the Testing Options but the Home Care Association has requested that it be added and suggests using this form https://business.nh.gov/DOS_COVID19Testing/ and where it says "Testing Location First Choice", select "I cannot travel to any of these locations."

WHO IS MY LEGISLATOR?

Use this quick link to find and contact your local State Rep and Senator:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

Visit your town or city’s website to find contact information for your local elected officials.

Tell them your ideas, thoughts & concerns!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

In January 2021 the Legislature will meet to begin hearing Bills. At this time, it’s unclear how and where meetings will be held given the constraints of COVID. Also unclear is whether Bills from 2020 that were killed (not passed) will be reintroduced. Following is a recap of some of the 2020 Bills that impact older adults:

Re Public Comment

NH - HB1303 establishing a commission to study expanding public testimony opportunities to remote locations statewide.

Primary Sponsor: Representative William Hatch (D) BILL KILLED

Housing

NH - HB1510 enabling municipalities to adopt a property tax exemption for qualifying accessory dwelling units. This bill enables municipalities to adopt a property tax exemption for qualifying Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). An ADU is a residential living unit that is within or attached to a single-family dwelling, and that provides independent living facilities for one or more persons, including provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation

on the same parcel of land as the principal dwelling unit it accompanies. Primary Sponsor Representative Harrison Kanzler (D) BILL KILLED

Financial Exploitation

NH - SB677 relative to protective orders for vulnerable adults. This bill establishes a procedure for vulnerable adults to petition for protective orders and seek permanent and temporary relief from abuse, exploitation, and neglect. A similar bill passed in 2019 but was vetoed by the governor. Primary Sponsor: Senator Jeb Bradley (R) INTERIM STUDY

Long Term Care

Omnibus bill - HB578 – SIGNED by Governor Establishes a committee to study the safety of residents and employees in long-term care facilities; Clarifies the cost controls for long-term care services; Requires the commissioner of the department of health and human services to amend the state Medicaid plan amendment and adopt rules for reimbursement of the costs of training nursing assistants

Your Voice

2021 BUDGETS

The upcoming Legislative Session is the budget cycle of the Biennium and along with the Town Meetings in March we are entering a period when we will be facing “the new normal” as it’s being called. But it is anything but normal! Our State and local budgets will be addressing a host of new issues and concerns.

You can find your Representative at <https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/> Your voice has never been more critical than in this time of change. Your Representative will be faced with complex and difficult issues and wants and needs your perspective.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE DESPITE MASKS

Cheryl Chambers, head coach for Mississippi State University’s Speech and Debate Team suggests these three tips.

1. Use your eyes: Although it’s more difficult to recognize or display facial expressions that exhibit emotions such as happiness or disgust, it’s still possible. After all, there’s a very expressive part of your face that isn’t covered by the mask: your eyes.

If you want to increase understanding with a masked individual, you should look them in the eyes, which may be easier said than done as eye contact can trigger self-consciousness. With that said, eye contact can also make you appear more intelligent and trustworthy.

2. Body language matters: Often enough, the body conveys more information than the words being said. Being aware of your own body language can help you be more effective when communicating with a mask on. When engaged in a conversation, you can appear more attentive by turning your body toward the individual, leaning in, or nodding. To let another person know you want to start speaking, straighten your posture, hold up your index finger or nod more frequently.
3. Pay attention to your voice: Along with the actual words, you also use volume, tone, pauses, and fillers to convey your message. For instance, a lower-pitched whisper may denote sadness or

insecurity, whereas a higher-pitched shout could show anger or intensity. To effectively communicate your message, make sure the volume and tone correspond with the emotion you’re trying to convey.

Of course, face masks can muffle or dampen your voice, so if you need to speak louder, try to be aware that raising your voice can alter the message you are trying to send. Perhaps instead of changing the tone of your voice, you can try to improve your enunciation

Health, 11/11/20



PETS JOIN IN ON OLLI GATHERINGS HELD REMOTELY

Zoom conferences provide insight and access otherwise unavailable during meet-ups OLLI members are immersed in Zoom meetings to continue learning, to enjoy each other's company and to conduct the business of the organization. Unlike many of our business colleagues, OLLI members enjoy the

frequent appearances of pets on screen. So much so that in early November, OLLI gave the Zoom link to the OLLI pets to make their appearances on an invited basis.

Who didn't show up? Jack, Jen and Brian's cat, whose long black tail reliably curls across the full height of Jen's Zoom block at every meeting.

To be fair, he did make his appearance near the end of the two-hour event. Maybe he was perturbed at the invitation to all those other pets?

Or, maybe, well, he's a cat.

OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, at Granite State College is a program for active learners age 50 and beyond. It features a varied menu of cost-effective courses as well as opportunities for volunteering and social interaction.

Since mid-March, OLLI has been operating entirely remotely, using Zoom technology to continue its programming.

Pet Tales attracted 13 humans, 10 pets, innumerable stories and pictures and an uncountable number of "awwwwwws." As always, when OLLI members get together to share stories, there are great laughs and ever-deepening friendships. Two members in attendance have been part of OLLI for 15 years and have commented that all the years of classes, meetings and parties have never yielded "getting to know you" in the same way as these Zoom affairs. After all, through Zoom, we are in each other's kitchens, studies and even bedrooms, as well as meeting the furry families!

Ed's RSVP to the Pet Tales event included the suggestion "Ask me about Satan." So we did. And Ed told us about the big ferocious dog which his father had named Satan. Ed recounted how his father would stand on the porch of his Philadelphia house in a predominantly Irish-Catholic neighborhood and bellow, "Satan, come here, right now!"

One of Peg's four cats strolled across the desk, two of Terri's seven.

Concord Monitor

Commission on Aging Update

The Commission on Aging November meeting included presentations by the Attorney General's Office, Consumer

Protection Bureau and the Financial Exploitation Unit. The Commission building bridges and exploring the roles of State Agencies, getting firsthand input on trends, issues and related Statutory support.

How to Contact NH Commission on Aging
Chair, Polly Campion
Pkc441@outlook.com
Vice Chair, Ken Berlin
kaberlin@comcast.net
Clerk, Roberta Berner
bernerabel@aol.com
Executive Director, Rebecca Sky
Rebecca.L.Sky@das.nh.gov

The Financial Exploitation Unit's primary focus is on prosecution and has a victim advocate to assist individuals through the process. It should be noted that Advocate is also a member of the Commission supporting an ongoing relationship.

The Consumer Protection Bureau emphasized the need for ongoing and more education as scam growth is significant. There is concern that the Holiday season will only increase that number. The Bureau does do press releases when trends are seen and has a good relationship with WMUR to increase public awareness .

(Why the Commission is important. NH does not have an independent Agency on Aging to address the broad issues faced by people as they age. The Commission, formed in September of 2019, is taking up that role. Their meetings are open to the public as are their Task Force meetings.

To learn more and be involved, <https://nhcoa.nh.gov/>. EngAGING NH is

represented at all meetings and we continue to be encouraged and supportive of the approaches taken in defining the Commission's role, identifying issues, and creating task forces. Sessions like this one are informative and supportive of a more cohesive approach to addressing issues.)

**Focus on
Community**

YOUR VOICE COUNTS

New Hampshire Listens envisions a New Hampshire where residents are connected, engaged and heard in decisions that impact their lives and where all have equitable access to justice, opportunity, and liberty. Its mission is to help New Hampshire residents talk, listen, and act together so communities can work for everyone.

Local, "Listens" organizations are key partners with NH Listens in building, strengthening, and sustaining civic infrastructure in the Granite State. These organizations are locally controlled and operated and take on a range of affiliations with local community organizations such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, or youth-centered organizations.

Local "Listens" groups build authentic relationships across their community and develop sustained capacity to address a wide range of issues over time and are active in a range of topics, from town planning, to substance misuse, to education, and more. They also plan community building events and give residents the opportunity to engage in "round tables, not podiums" meetings.

Current local listening groups include: Dover Listens, Nashua Listens, Newmarket Common Ground, North Country Listens, Ossipee Listens, Pittsfield Listens, Portsmouth Listens, and Rochester Listens

<https://carsey.unh.edu/new-hampshire-listens>

NOT FOR PROFIT HELPS WITH CARE OF PETS

Alongside companionship, owning a pet has long been associated with a wide range of health benefits. Take a recent study, for example, which found that pet owners have experienced significantly lower levels of stress and loneliness during COVID-19 lockdowns. When it comes to the elderly, having a pet by their side can often mean the world to them.

That's why nonprofit organization Pets for the Elderly has recently announced that it will increase its efforts to help senior citizens care for their pets — a move that's particularly welcome during these emotionally-exhausting times of pandemic.

As part of the initiative, the nonprofit will expand its grant program to include animal care assistance at participating shelters. This will help seniors cover the costs of vet appointments, food, and in-home visits, in which shelters will check in on the pet owners.

Since it's been founded in 1992, Pets for the Elderly has helped nearly 100,000 seniors nationwide pay for their pet adoption fees. And their mission to help connect people with pets and assist them in caring for these loyal companions has become ever more important amid the coronavirus pandemic, according to the organization's executive director, Susan Kurovski.

"Now, especially with COVID, bridging this whole isolation gap with

RAISE YOUR VOICE!
Please let us know what's on your mind and what's important to you.
engagingnh@gmail.com

companionship is going to show — when we look back — as being key to so many people’s mental wellness,” said Susan Kurovski, the nonprofit’s executive director. “And you don’t have to live alone to feel isolated.”

“Seniors take better care of themselves because somebody’s counting on them. They maintain a routine. They take their vitamins and their prescriptions on time because there’s someone relying on them, and that is so important,” she added.

<https://people.com/pets/pets-for-the-elderly-program-senior-pet-adoption/>

News You Can Use

HOLIDAY TIPS

With travel and large gatherings restricted, the holiday season will undoubtedly look very different this year. Some people may be spending the holiday season alone for the first time in their lives, but we can still stay connected to people and traditions even when we’re physically apart. Here are five ways to celebrate the holidays if you can’t be with your friends or family.

Make family recipes. There are few things that bring us as much comfort as home cooking. Choose a couple of your family favorites or holiday classics to whip up to warm your belly and your soul. If you’re feeling ambitious, you can even put together a digital family recipe book to send out so everyone can enjoy some comfort food.

Put together care packages. Sending out care packages to those you love can feel almost as good as receiving one. Think about others who may be spending the holiday season solo and send them a box of treats like cookies, festive candles, and a list of holiday movie recommendations.

Plan a video chat. Organize a video chat with family and friends to share a distanced meal, cook together, or simply acknowledge what you’re grateful for this holiday season.

Deliver food to your community. Want to make a family recipe, but worried about having way too many leftovers? Wrap up homemade goodies and bring them to neighbors or friends to share the deliciousness. Many shelters and food banks are also facing increased demand this year and would love non-perishable donations.

Visit a place of nostalgia. This could be a Christmas tree farm, your family’s favorite beach, or just your local coffee shop for some hot chocolate. Plan a visit to whatever destination spurs your holiday spirit.

‘Tis the season of sugar cookies, but there’s no sugar-coating that spending the holidays away from family can be lonely. Try to focus on the positives and make time for activities that will help you feel connected, grateful, and joyous.

Solution News

MUSIC AND DEMENTIA

Carol Rosenstein has been helping people with dementia through the power of music since 2014. Her non-profit, Music Mends Minds, has created 20 bands that have improved the quality of life for more than 200 people.

There’s plenty of evidence that shows that listening and playing music is beneficial for people with neurodegenerative diseases, and that’s more important than ever during a pandemic. Isolation takes a huge toll on seniors, and raises their risk of dementia.

Rosenstein moved her organization's programming online. Dozens of participants

now meet virtually several times a week to play music together and enjoy a little bit of normalcy.

"What the world needs now is music. Music is medicine for the mind," she says. "We can bring such happiness and hope in this moment of relative despair."

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

There's a silver lining to those months spent at home -- longer hair means non-profit hair stylists who make free wigs for cancer patients say they've received a boost in donations from people who've grown their hair out in the last several months.

CNN "more wigs for people who want them."

RAPID COVID TEST

Because of limited lab capacity, people getting tested for COVID-19 these days sometimes have to wait days or even weeks to get their results back, rendering the tests nearly useless. This often makes it incredibly difficult for contact tracers to find other infected patients in time to stop the spread of the virus.

And while rapid tests exist, they aren't always accurate and can be rather costly. But a new low-cost test developed by scientists at Oxford University may solve both problems by producing results in less than five minutes.

"One of the biggest advantages of this is speed — we're talking about a timeframe of one to five minutes to

get a result," says Nicolas Shiaelis, one of the researchers working on the technology.

Unlike conventional PCR tests that detect genetic material and require extra steps to prepare a sample, the new tests involve throat swabs which are scanned for virus particles. Machine learning software then automatically identifies the pathogen based on its chemistry, size, and shape. According to the research team, the novel test can detect the virus with high accuracy and it can also distinguish it from other viruses, like the flu.

To facilitate the widespread use of this novel technique, the researchers are now building a user-friendly, autonomous device that can be used outside the lab. "Essentially, the test candidate will do a cheek swab or provide saliva," Shiaelis says. "And then imagine something like a vending machine. You just put [the sample] in, and then it takes care of it."

The device could enable rapid mass-testing at airports to screen every passenger before they board a plane, and its low cost could allow developing countries, in particular, to benefit from the technology.

The researchers hope to start product development in early 2021 and have an approved device six months afterward. As health officials have noted, through a vaccine is likely to be approved by that time, the technology will still be very useful.

The Optimist Daily.

Your Local Resources

ServiceLink Aging & Disability Resource Center 866-634-9412 (servicelink.nh.gov);

211 NH is the connection for NH residents to the most up to date resources they need from specially trained Information and Referral Specialists.

211 NH is available 24 hours, 365 days a year. Multilingual assistance and TDD access are also available.

HOSPITAL AT HOME

Mayo Clinic announced a new care model that will deliver innovative, comprehensive, and complex care to patients—all from the comfort of home via a new technology platform. Through advanced care at home, patients with conditions previously managed in a hospital will have the option to transition to a home setting and receive compassionate, high-quality virtual and in-person care and recovery services.

Under the direction of Mayo Clinic physicians, advanced care at home offers comprehensive and restorative health care services including infusions, skilled nursing, medications, laboratory and imaging services, behavioral health, and rehabilitation services from a network of paramedics, nurses and an ecosystem of support team members. This initiative, part of the Mayo Clinic Platform, brings these elements together for a seamless care experience at home, combining technology, innovation, and clinical expertise to ensure that the needs of the patient come first.

HELP!

Do you need help with your Social Security or VA benefits? Do you have questions about the IRS or Medicare? If so, your NH Congressional Delegation can help!

Your two U.S. Senators and two Congresswomen all have staff equipped to help New Hampshire residents with issues, concerns or questions related to the federal government. The contact information for the NH Congressional Delegation is below. Please don't hesitate to reach out!

Senator Jeanne Shaheen
2 Wall Street, Suite 220
Manchester, NH 03101
603-647-7500
www.shaheen.senate.gov

Senator Maggie Hassan
1589 Elm Street, 3rd Floor
Manchester, NH 03101
603-622-2204
www.hassan.senate.gov

Rep. Chris Pappas
1st Congressional District
660 Central Ave., Unit 101
Dover, NH 03820
603-285-4300
www.shea-porter.house.gov

Rep. Annie Kuster
2nd Congressional District
18 North Main Street, 4th Floor
Concord, NH 03301
603-226-1002
www.kuster.house.gov

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MEDICARE REMINDER

Medicare covers medically necessary items and services related to coronavirus when you receive care from a provider who accepts Original Medicare or is in-network for your Medicare Advantage Plan. Medicare has also changed certain coverage requirements in response to the current coronavirus public health emergency.

Medicare Advantage Plans must cover everything that Original Medicare does, but they can do so with different costs and restrictions. Additionally, Medicare Advantage and Part D plans must meet certain requirements following the declaration of a public health emergency.

Visit Medicare Interactive to learn about Medicare coverage during the coronavirus public health emergency.

Medicare Watch

TO PONDER

"When I was 15, I spent a month working on an archaeological dig. I was talking to one of the archeologists one day during our lunch break and he asked those kinds of

'getting to know you,' questions you ask young people:

Do you play sports? What's your favorite subject? And I told him, no I don't play any sports. I do theater, I'm in choir, I play the violin and piano, I used to take art classes.

And he went WOW. That's amazing! And I said,

"Oh no, but I'm not any good at ANY of them."

And he said something then that I will never forget and which absolutely blew my mind because no one had ever said anything like it to me before:

"I don't think being good at things is the point of doing them.

I think you've got all these wonderful experiences with different skills, and that all teaches you things and makes you an interesting person, no matter how well you do them."

"And that honestly changed my life."

"I went from a failure, someone who hadn't been talented enough at anything to excel, to someone who did things because I enjoyed them. I had been raised in such an achievement-oriented environment,

so inundated with the myth of Talent, that I thought it was only worth doing things if you could 'Win' at them."

Kurt Vonnegut

Health & Wellness

PETS AND WELLBEING

For older adults, pets are a buffer against

loneliness and isolation, but the benefits go beyond boosting human spirits. A growing body of evidence suggests our

four-legged friends improve our health, too.

Biologist and public health researcher Erika Friedmann has been studying just how therapeutic

that bond is. Her research with colleagues was among the first to document the health benefits of pet ownership 40 years ago. That research found that people who had a heart attack and owned a pet were more likely to be alive a year later than those without a pet. Among the 39 patients without pets, 11 (28%) had died compared to only three (6%) of the 53 pet owners.

Now a professor and associate dean for research at the University of Maryland School of Nursing, Friedmann was the lead author for a scientific paper published in 2018 that found dog owners adopt healthier lifestyles, including getting enough exercise and sleep.

"Having a dog gives a person a reason to exercise and thus improves cardiovascular health," the paper says.

www.kiplinger.com

MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEM TIPS

Considering purchasing a medical alert system? Consumer Reports conducted a study of various models and offers these features to consider:

Call buttons and fall detection: A vast majority of surveyed CR members said their medical alert devices had a portable call button, while 4 out of 10 featured an in-

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home call button. (Some systems included both.) Over a third (36 percent) of the devices came with fall detection, which uses sensors to register falls in order to automatically contact a dispatch center. Fall detection usually comes with an additional monthly fee.

Monitored vs. unmonitored: The seven reviewed brands all offer monitored systems, meaning the device's call button connects to a live person, 24/7. Unmonitored systems can be programmed to dial an emergency contact. While there's an advantage to having a monitored system—you're guaranteed to connect with a trained professional, no matter when an emergency occurs—it typically comes with a monthly fee.

Cell vs. landline service: In the past, medical alert devices were designed to work over landlines, which meant they were largely confined to the home. Today, many systems operate on cellular networks, allowing users to summon help from anywhere. Not everyone surveyed knew how their system sent calls. But a higher percentage of people had devices that used cell service rather than a landline (54 percent vs. 32 percent; 14 percent don't know).

Basic service vs. additional service fees: Eighty-six percent of CR members who rated one of the seven brands said they paid some kind of monthly fee, which isn't surprising given that a majority had monitored systems. When selecting a device,

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Make your check out to Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. and note "EngAGING NH" on the memo line. DRC's mailing address is 64 North Main Street, Suite 2, 3rd Floor, Concord, NH 03301-4913.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

it's a good idea to determine the monthly cost and ask for a rundown of what it covers.

Unintentional activation: About 8 out of 10 of those surveyed had activated their medical device, with accidental activations being more common than intentional ones and most reported that they weren't charged for the trigger.

Malfunction rates: A large majority of users reported that their devices never malfunctioned, a category that included not working when activated, failing to detect a fall, or running out of battery life.

COVID PREVENTION

NASAL SPRAY

The problem with any potential Covid-19 vaccine is that they are difficult to distribute in low-income and rural areas. Fortunately, researchers from Columbia University may have an effective alternative in the form of a nasal spray. The spray is a lipopeptide (a lipid and peptide combination) that stops the coronavirus from fusing with a target cell's membrane by blocking a key protein from adopting a necessary shape. It works immediately, lasts for at least 24 hours, and is affordable. Most importantly, it doesn't need refrigeration, which is a big barrier for transporting vaccines to rural areas.

In tests so far, the researchers say it has successfully prevented COVID-19 infections in ferrets as well as a 3D model of human lungs. However, before the nasal spray reaches the public, the researchers

still need to conduct human trials and figure out how to scale up the production of the spray

The Optimist Daily

MOUTHING OFF TO COVID-19

It's hard to believe that even today some folks think washing a kid's mouth out with soap for sassing off is a good idea. The American Academy of Pediatrics considers it a form of child abuse.

In contrast, using mouthwash to rinse your mouth — voluntarily — can be a healthy step, according to a study in the Journal of Medical Virology. It KO's the virus that causes COVID-19.

Researchers tested a wide range of mouthwashes, such as Crest Pro Health (active ingredient cetylpyridium chloride — safe and effective but shouldn't be used for more than seven days according to a 1994 FDA report) and Listerine Antiseptic (active ingredients eucalyptol, menthol, methyl salicylate and thymol). They also looked at hydrogen-peroxidebased mouthwashes. They found Crest Pro Health killed off at least 99.9% of the virus in the mouth; Listerine Antiseptic killed more than 99.99% and peroxide brands knocked out slightly less.

Overall, the researchers say, "Most of the common over-the-counter mouthwashes/gargles tested demonstrated at least a 90% reduction in infectious virus at one

minute of contact time."

And the longer you rinse the more KO power they have.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

If you like this newsletter, please share it with your family, neighbors, friends and colleagues.

So if you're looking to make sure you're doing all you can to keep COVID-19 at bay, here's one more effective technique to complement mask wearing and social distancing.

Dr. Mehmet Oz & Dr. Michael Roizen

Tech Tips

HOW TO SPOT FAKE SHOPPING SITES

Check the domain name (the part in the address bar) for wrong spellings, or ones that end in .net or .org — they're not usually used for online shopping. If you're feeling wary about what you're seeing, take a minute to check the About Us info. Is the grammar and spelling correct? Is it easy to contact them? And one last thing, if you receive promotional emails consider not opening them and moving them to your junk folder, indicating spam or phishing as appropriate to your email product. You can always go directly to the website, not through the email, to check the validity of the promotion.

Does it sound too good to be true? Chances are, it is. Huge discounts on highly sought-after items are often a sign of a scam.

AVG News

TECHNOLOGY USE

From the results of a study done in Greece, it is evident that the use of new technologies by the older adult population significantly contributes to a better quality of life, improving parameters of daily living such as transportation facilitation, communication and participation in social life. Over the past two decades, computer use among older adults has doubled— and today, 67 percent of seniors are using the

internet, according to the Pew Research Center.

However, despite the growing trend towards a more computer-savvy population, many older adults fall behind younger generations when it comes to technology adoption. Fortunately, a range of online computer classes for seniors are making it possible for computer newbies to understand computing basics – and mid-level to advanced users can get training on software programs, mobile apps, and the like. This non-governmental site lists a number of resources:

www.medicare.org/articles/senior-computer-classes-to-try-online-for-free/

ONLINE PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

OATS (Older Adults Technology Systems) is a non-profit organization that offers CyberSenior.org - helps with seniors connect with the digital world offering weekly classes, etc. and Wellconnected.com - formerly Senior Centers Without Walls - offers free programs of varying interests. All programs are both phone and computer based.

Dollars & Sense

SUDDENLY RETIRED?

The pandemic seems to be driving a surge of

early retirements as businesses close or downsize and older people weigh the health risks of continuing to work. Some steps to consider:

1. Create your retirement budget

Tally your expenses and identify any you can trim. Include irregular expenses, such as home repairs or a car replacement, that you're likely to face in coming years.

2. Evaluate all income sources.

You may face decisions about what to do with workplace retirement accounts, such as whether to roll a 401(k) account into an IRA or how to take a pension. You may have to evaluate a buyout offer or figure out what to do with stock options.

3. Make informed social security choices

Social Security may be your largest source of income during retirement, and research shows most people would be better off delaying their applications to maximize their checks. That's not always possible, of course, but often financial planners recommend tapping other retirement funds first if that allows people to delay drawing on Social Security.

4. Consider downsizing — perhaps radically.

If you can't cover expenses with your income, you may have other alternatives. If you own a home, have substantial equity (at least 50%) and are at least 62, a reverse mortgage can help you turn your home's value into a guaranteed monthly check. Or you may decide to sell your home and find somewhere cheaper to live.

www.nerdwallet.com/article/finance/unexpected-retirement

CHARITY DONATIONS

Considering making a donation and want to know more about a specific organization? Here's a site to help: www.charitynavigator.org/

Laugh & Live Longer

WORD PLAY

- I had a chicken who couldn't count her eggs. She was a mathemachicken
- A man just assaulted me with cream, butter, and milk. How Dairy!!!!
- So if a cow doesn't produce milk, is it a milk dud or an udder failure?

- Police were summoned to a daycare center where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

WISE MAN

An elderly man in Louisiana had owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond in the back. It was properly shaped for swimming, so he fixed it up nicely with picnic tables, horseshoe courts, and some apple and peach trees. One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he hadn't been there for a while and look it over. He grabbed a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee.

As he came closer, he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end. One of the women shouted to him, 'we're not coming out until you leave!'

The old man frowned, 'I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked.'

Holding the bucket up he said, 'I'm here to feed the alligator.'

Some old men can still think fast.

COMPUTER PROBLEMS

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers. Yesterday, I had a problem, so I called Georgie, the 11 year old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control, and asked him to come over.

Georgie clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, 'So, what was wrong? He replied, 'It was an ID ten T error.'

I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, 'An, ID ten

T error? What's that? In case I need to fix it again.'

Georgie grinned. 'Haven't you ever heard of an ID ten T error before?'

'No,' I replied.

'Write it down,' he said, 'and I think you'll figure it out.'

So I wrote down: ID10T. I used to like Georgie...the little brat.

CHILDREN ARE QUICK

TEACHER: Why are you late?

STUDENT: Class started before I got here.

TEACHER: John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?

JOHN: You told me to do it without using tables.

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

DONALD: H I J K L M N O.

TEACHER: What are you talking about?

DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O

COVID HUMOR, AGAIN

I just got pulled over by a cop. He said, "I can smell alcohol." I told him that's because you're not respecting social distancing.

Anybody have an owner's manual for a husband? Mine's making a whining sound.

Not to brag, but I just went into another room and actually remembered why I was there. It was the bathroom, but still...

Hugh Hefner became a multimillionaire staying home in his jammies...I'm not having the same results.

Purposeful Living

Nancy D'Agostino is 73 years old, lives in Salem and volunteers at our senior center.

Nancy introduced an idea that was new to our center, intergenerational programs. These programs bring the seniors and the children together to foster an age integrated community. "Bridges Together" is a six week reading program where senior volunteers go into the classrooms and read to a group of children. This is followed by a discussion and a craft project relating to the book and conversation. Nancy has been the driving force behind this collaboration between schools and seniors in our town. Nancy has recruited, trained and kept track of volunteer hours and background checks for 46 volunteers this year.

Nancy has expanded our reading programs to five locations and added Yoga, Cooking and Gardening. We have children reading to seniors at our local assisted living. We hosted an Intergenerational day at the local High School Performing Arts Center and now we offer a ROC (Raising Others Children) support group that meets weekly at the library.

Nancy has actively fundraised for the program and has brought together a board of Directors called The Intergenerational Collaborative of Salem.



Nancy D'Agostino

The VISION: People of all generations understand, respect and support one another.

PURPOSE: Intergenerational Collaborative of Salem is a collaborative of

organizations, businesses and individuals committed to helping Salem bridge the gaps between older and younger generations.

Nancy is an amazing woman that has worked hard to not only bring her ideas but put in endless hours to make it happen. She is not a person that is comfortable in the limelight but she definitely deserves it.

Board Notes

We're sick of the Corona virus. We miss being with our loved ones and enjoying what our world has to offer. We're dizzy from "pivoting" to adapt to a new normal every few weeks. We've given up looking for silver linings; it's just disrespectful to everyone who has died and everyone who is suffering to imagine some up-side. The only thing we can do in bad times, other than endure them, is to learn from them, so we offer a few insights.

"We're all in this together" isn't some trite truism. It's an inescapable fact. By now, most of us have stories of people who have been infected or whose lives have been upended by this deadly version of "Five Degrees of Separation." If we learn nothing else, we should be learning that America isn't a country of 350 million individuals; we are a huge, intertwined, interdependent family, and even a small act, like wearing a mask, is a significant way to respect and take care of one another.

There aren't two sides to every story. There are many sides. The more we can invite one another to tell our stories, the more the communities we create take on the multi-faceted beauty of gem. Technology can keep us connected within our

comfort zones, and also introduce us to people of all backgrounds who share our common humanity. It is this breaking down of artificial barriers that will repair our ragged social fabric and give fresh meaning to "E Pluribus Unum."

There is a special richness in building community around big issues with multi-generational groups. It turns out "that old time rock & roll" has never become un-cool, and that high school students just might gaze with envy and wonder at a septuagenarian who was around to see Queen live in concert. It turns out we all want to be healthy, live in a sustainable world, and create a just and equitable country. It turns out it gives us hope and energy to exchange ideas, talk about our shared future, and together envision futures younger generations will navigate without us.

We're all at least a little ageist. We make unconscious assumptions about others, and even ourselves, that limit and divide us. A good re to help sniff out ageist thinking and dissolve boundaries is a Facebook group called This Chair Rocks, moderated by Ashton Applewhite, the author



of This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism. It is an ongoing conversation about recognizing our interconnectedness. It also provides opportunities to advocate for issues particularly affecting older Americans. For example, while people over the age of 65 make up 16% of the U.S. population, we account for over 80% of COVID-19 deaths. As highly involved stakeholders, our representation on President Elect Biden's pandemic task force is absolutely essential. There are s and links for contacting our representatives to insist it includes experts on ageing. A good New Year's resolution might be to embrace

Contact Information for NH Members of the U.S. Congress

Name	Mailing Address	Phone	E-Mail Contact Form
U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas	323 Cannon HOB, Wash- ington, DC 20515	202-225- 5456	https://pappas.house.gov/
U.S. Rep Ann Kuster	137 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515	202-225- 5206	https://kuster.house.gov/con- tact/email-me
U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan	B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224- 3324	https://www.hassan.sen- ate.gov/content/contact-senator
U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen	506 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224- 2841	www.shaheen.senate.gov/con- tact/contact-jeanne

ENH NEWSLETTER-DECEMBER 2020

these hard lessons of 2020; through them, we can also embrace our power as older Americans and broaden our sense of community to create healing in hard times.