



A Citizen Voice for the
Aging Experience

November 2020
Volume 14, #11

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ENGAGING NH NEWS

Guest Opinion

Reimagining Dementia

by Mary Fridley

Reimagining Dementia: A Creative Coalition for Justice is an international group of dementia activists and allies—health professionals; people living with dementia (young and old); carers/care partners; family and community members; advocates, artists, academics, policy makers and others—who share a diverse and humanizing vision of care and support that promotes inclusion, relationality, creativity, joy and the possibility of growth for everyone living with, and impacted by, dementia. We focus on developing projects, programs, policies and approaches that successfully use play, performance, improvisation and the arts to creatively challenge the biomedical and institutional approaches to care, and the fear, stigma and hopelessness they perpetuate.

In the midst of a global pandemic, we are mobilizing tens of thousands of people with dementia and their families—together with the communities and care settings in which they live—to create environments in which everyone is supported to thrive and to grow. We join with millions of people across the

***No human life is
disposable!***

globe in calling for an end to racial, social, environmental, and economic injustice in all sectors of society.

No human life is disposable! As part of this international uprising, we issue a specific call for the radical transformation of the very attitudes and conditions that are contributing to the isolation, abuse, and neglect within and outside of long-term and community-based care settings by means of, for example, the

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pathologizing of human experience, and the use of chemical, physical, and environmental restraints. There are most certainly compassionate, innovative, and deeply caring health professionals in the system; but this is often despite a system that devalues them, not because of it. This broken system of care has created a perfect storm in which COVID-19 has disproportionately claimed the lives of older citizens across the world. This is an international atrocity that has made it transparently and tragically clear that these systemic vulnerabilities are of our own making; we are failing our oldest, our poorest, and our most vulnerable populations. Inspired by other dementia activists, it is our contention that we can and must do better. We can and must seize this moment to come together in new ways. We can, and must, find ways to leverage our collective resources, expertise and passion to organize and mobilize a grassroots force that can move the conversation about aging and dementia in a positive, creative, inclusive, just and life-affirming direction. If you are interested in:

- Transforming the broader culture that produces and reproduces the stigma associated with aging and dementia;
- Reforming the culture and practice of health and wellness, dementia, and aged care and support;
- Challenging the ethics and assumptions of institutionalized care and advocating for creative, relational, and inclusive approaches that support ongoing growth and development for all in caring contexts;

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.

- Amplifying the voices of people living with dementia, and finding ways to share with the world what they and the dementia community have learned about living more joyfully with uncertainty, fear and isolation;
- Advancing the role that art + activism + technology can play in raising awareness and promoting social transformation; and
- Bringing play, performance, improvisation and the arts into homes, organizations, communities and dementia care and support settings. ...we hope you will work with us in making a difference at the local, national, and/or global level. Whether you can do a little or a lot, you are welcome. We are in this for the long haul, so we hope you will join us in making sure our impact is felt long after this crisis has ended.

Mary Fridley, Reimagining Dementia Coordinator.

NH Updates

MOMENTUM FUND ANNOUNCES NEW NH 2020 GRANTS

ALDA-Seacoast NH: \$10,000 to support the creation and N.H. distribution of a "toolbox" for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community; resources include clear face

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masks, amplification devices, supply of Hearing Loss Communication Cards to alert/communicate with first responders, and more

Farmsteads of New England: \$10,000 to support staff and purchase cleaning supplies to safely meet the service needs of adults with disabilities and the increased demand from new clients

Gibson Center for Senior Services: \$10,000 to expand a collaborative model developed through age-friendly regional work that brings together libraries, OLLI, and the Senior Center to provide older adults training and materials so they can connect virtually

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council: \$10,000 to support the purchase of PPE and other needed cleaning supplies to resume operations and programming for the Council’s eight senior centers

Granite State Independent Living: \$10,000 to support the purchase and distribution of PPE (face masks) to staff and their household members as part of a broader plan to address COVID community spread

Greater Sullivan Strong: \$10,000 to support a new 40-agency collaborative leading the community-driven re-allocation of funds for food access, telehealth integration and PPE

Monadnock Family Services: \$10,000 to support staff conducting outreach to

ensuring basic needs are met for older adults who remain isolated while in-person services resume

Seacoast Mental Health Center: \$10,000 to support the safe operation of services and programs while meeting increased and anticipated demand for mental health services across Rockingham County

Spark the Dream: \$10,000 to provide Manchester's African immigrant community with culturally appropriate information about COVID-19, masks, sanitizers, and emergency assistance (rent/utility)

Upper Valley Strong: \$10,000 to support a coalition in the community-driven re-allocation of funds for emergency COVID services; Upper Valley Haven serves as the fiscal agent

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

FUEL ASSISTANCE

As we approach winter our thoughts turn to keeping our homes warm. NH has both Fuel and Weatherization Assistance Programs determined by gross household income (total income including tips, interest/dividends, pensions, and all wages or salaries before deductions; rental income and self-employment may be calculated differently), number of household members, and vulnerability to heating costs. Eligibility for both programs can usually be determined during one appointment. Contact your Local Community Action Program for assistance for the

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Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

www.nh.gov/osi/energy/programs/fuel-assistance

CONNECTING NH

Broadband planning has been underway in several NH towns before the pandemic emphasized the need for high-speed, reliable internet. In June, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Relief and Recovery announced the availability of \$50 million in federal CARES Act funding that could be used to complete broadband projects. The Connecting New Hampshire – Emergency Broadband Expansion Program was designed to address challenges for students participating in remote learning, individuals working remotely, as well as Granite Staters utilizing the internet to access telehealth services, including vital mental health services. While we move ahead with expansion, it should be noted that expanding broadband has challenges including such issues as pole access versus pole ownership. There are several funding sources for promoting access in rural areas, but each comes with its own set of requirements and criteria requiring navigation by planners.

NEW POSITION AVAILABLE

Future In Sight is a NH based, nonprofit organization that is dedicated to transforming the lives of those who are blind, visually impaired, and their families. They have a newly created position, *Director, Adult Services*, that balances the counterpart role of the Director of Youth Services. The new Director will be responsible for the operational success of adult services at Future In Sight, ensuring seamless team management, program delivery, quality control, and evaluation.

To learn more about their services or to see posting link go to:

<https://futureinsight.org/careers-employment/>

Your Voice

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Just as the coronavirus (COVID-19) has closed workplaces and curtailed activities in many different areas of life, state legislatures are facing similar challenges. They are exploring alternatives to physical meetings and considering procedural initiatives to facilitate legislative business, within the constitutional, statutory and rules-based constraints of a legislative process.

In NH, in consideration for public input, House Rule 65(b) was adopted and provides that deadlines may be reasonably amended at the discretion of the Speaker of the House, to be timely noticed in the House Calendar and on the General Court website. Senate Rule 7-1 is the equivalent measure for the Senate. HB 1169, pending, would eliminate the requirement that all votes must be by roll call when electronic or other means of communication is being used, making the proceedings more efficient.

As we move into the 2021 session, we will be facing a number of Bills as well as proposed procedural changes as we adjust to new circumstances. Our voices have never been more critical and online access supports participation. We will bring you more information as it is available.

Commission on Aging Update

Following the initial organizational meetings held in September and October 2019, the Commission met eleven

times, hired an executive director, and engaged in a learning agenda. The Executive Director, Rebecca Sky, began January 31, 2019 and within six weeks, COVID-19 required the new Commission to rethink how it would accomplish its work. Despite the inability to meet in person, the Commission completed a strategic planning process and formed Task Forces in alignment with four identified strategic priorities:

3 Year Plan October 2020 to September 2023:

- Develop and advance strategies to improve people’s ability to age in the communities of their choice • Catalyze New Hampshire towards being an Age-Friendly State
- Engage Leaders regarding the Emerging Needs of Older Adults during the COVID-19 Epidemic
- Develop Commission Infrastructure to Support Operational Success. (editor’s note: NH doesn’t have an Agency on Aging to address a broad array of issues impacting NH citizens as we age. This new Commission is charged with this responsibility.)

Focus on Community

CDC TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

While Thanksgiving is traditionally a time for friends and relatives to reunite, the CDC says staying home is the best way to protect against the coronavirus. That means you may want to consider having a virtual gathering, sharing recipes or delivering meals to loved ones who have a chance of getting seriously sick from COVID-19, health officials say.

“A small dinner with only people who live in your household” introduces a low risk

for transmitting the disease, according to health officials. An outdoor meal with family and friends in your neighborhood poses a “moderate risk,” while

large indoor celebrations with non-household members should be avoided, the CDC said on its website.

Everyone is advised to steer clear of other “higher risk activities,” including crowded in-person Thanksgiving parades or races. The CDC also suggests people shop online for Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals instead of going into packed stores.

For those who plan to travel, health experts warn that leaving home “increases your chance of getting and spreading COVID-19.” The CDC says people who need to take Thanksgiving trips should know that some activities can heighten the risks of getting sick. Those include taking flights with layovers and staying in shared accommodations.

“Doing things and spending time with people you live with is less risky than doing things and spending time with people not from your household,” the CDC said on its website.

(Editor’s note: we have also found a number of websites for local communities that list activities and events to make this holiday fun, is not traditional!)

How to Contact NH Commission on Aging

Chair, Rep. Polly Campion
polly.campion@leg.state.nh.us

Vice Chair, Ken Berlin
kaberlin@comcast.net

Clerk, Roberta Berner
bernerabel@aol.com

CAP PROGRAMS

In 1964 the Economic Opportunity Act was signed into law by President Johnson creating the nationwide Community Action Network. Community Action was a bold idea, especially for the federal government. It handed over control to the local level, so that programs were geared specifically for target population needs. One of the goals is: TO Sustain and Honor Older Adults

Meals on Wheels, In-Home Care Programs, Senior Centers, Senior Day Care, Foster Grandparents, Congregate Meals, Medical Transportation, Volunteer Chore Services.

The Fuel Assistance Program is New Hampshire's arm of the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which is funded through the US Department of Health and Human Services. While OSI administers the program, the on-the-ground work is done by local Community Action Agencies with whom OSI contracts.

SACO ME AGE FRIENDLY PLAN

Saco's Age Friendly initiative, "A Community for a Lifetime", builds on concepts developed by the WHO (World Health Organization).

According to the WHO, an age friendly community is one that enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of age. It is a place that

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. It is available 24 hours, 365 days a year and offers Multilingual assistance and TDD access.

NH Legal Assistance can be reached at (800) 639-5290.

makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people important to them. Through action planning, taking action, evaluating progress, communities all around the world are taking steps to improve the health of their communities by promoting health and well-being over the course of the life span.

The Age Friendly model provides to communities a conceptual framework that includes 8 domains of livability. The domains include:

- outdoor spaces and buildings;
- transportation; housing;
- social participation;
- respect and social inclusion;
- civic participation and employment;
- communication and information; and
- community and health services; and
- provides a framework for communities to focus on and develop action plans.

Their Mission Statement, "A Community for a Lifetime", is to promote active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, engagement, and safety while removing barriers that prevent our citizens from remaining in their homes as they age. This will be accomplished through engagement with community organizations as well as collaboration with the City of Saco and the recruitment of community volunteers for the delivery of services that will empower

residents to remain in and engaged in their community as they age.

News You Can Use

ULTRA-LOW-COST-HEARING AIDS

200 million adults over the age of 65 suffer from age-related hearing loss around the world. In response, scientists at the Georgia Institute of Technology have designed a hearing aid device that uses only a dollar's worth of open-source parts and a 3D-printed case to function. The ultra-low-cost device, known as LoCHAIid, can be easily manufactured and repaired in locations where conventional hearing aids are priced beyond the reach of most citizens. It's also expected to meet most of the World Health Organization's targets for hearing aids aimed at mild to moderate age-related hearing loss. The prototypes built so far look like wearable music players instead of a traditional behind-the-ear hearing aids.

Worldwide, hearing aid adoption remains relatively low, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where fewer than 3% of adults use the devices—compared to 20% in wealthier countries. One of the main barriers is the cost of hearing aids, which go for about \$4,700 a pair in the US on average. That's what makes this new hearing aid so special. Costing just a dollar to produce and minimal work to assemble, this could improve hearing for millions of people around the world.

www.futurity.org/hearing-aids-hearing-loss-447362-2/

LETTER TO CONGRESS

Six nonprofit organizations and associations focused on aging signed a joint letter calling on Congress and the administration

to enact COVID-19 relief measures that safeguard older adults and care workers.

A federal plan is needed to end the "national nightmare" of the pandemic, the leaders of six national organizations representing aging services providers told the president, vice president and leaders in the Senate and House on Tuesday.

"We implore you to immediately deliver the leadership, resources and support needed to ensure the health, wellbeing and the very lives of the people we represent and serve every day in this country," the leaders of LeadingAge, AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, the American Geriatrics Society, the American Society on Aging, the Gerontological Society of America and the Village to Village Network wrote.

Almost 110,000 people aged more than 65 years have died from COVID-19, and millions more are threatened in a pandemic that is not over yet, they said.

What is needed, the association leaders said, is "a national plan that puts older adults and their care providers at the front of the line right alongside hospitals for life-saving resources."

Specifically, the letter called for:

- Immediate access to ample and appropriate personal protective equipment for workers.

ENH welcomes all points of view and invites your submissions.

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

engagingnh@gmail.com

What do you think?!

- Fully funded access to accurate and rapid-results testing.
- Assurance that states will consider the health and safety of older Americans as they reopen.
- Funding and support across the aging services continuum.

"Hero pay," paid family and medical leave and healthcare coverage for frontline workers.

"This is a historic moment. It must be met with historic action," the association leaders said. "What you, the leaders of our country, do in the next weeks will determine the life and death of many of our nation's most vulnerable older adults. Older lives are not expendable. You must act now."

www.mcknightsseniorliving.com

COVID VACCINE STUDIES

According to the Sept. 28, 2020 JAMA Internal Medicine, a recent study demonstrated that older adults are highly likely to be excluded from 53% of 847 COVID-19 clinical trials that qualified for detailed review.

Recent guidance from the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regulates vaccines, "strongly encourages" the inclusion of diverse populations in clinical vaccine development. That includes racial and ethnic minorities, older people and those with underlying medical problems, as well as pregnant women.

But the FDA does not require drug makers and researchers to meet those goals, and will not refuse trial data that doesn't comply. Nor are pharmaceutical firms required to publicly disclose their demographic goals.

THANKS MASSACHUSETTS!

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and need to be COVID treatment, here is a link/handout that you can print and put in your Go to Medical Care kit to aid in your care. With their permission, NH has adapted this version from our southern neighbor.

www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/documents/coronavirus-visual-tool.pdf

Health & Wellness

A GREAT LESSON ON STRESS

A lady confidently walked around the room with a raised glass of water while leading a seminar and explaining stress management to her audience. Everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, 'Half empty or half full?' She fooled them all. "How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile. Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. To 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm.

If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden - holding

stress longer and better each time practiced.

So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night. Pick them up again tomorrow if you must.

- 1 Accept the fact that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue!
- 2 Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.
- 3 Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.
- 4 Drive carefully ... It's not only cars that can be recalled by their Maker.
- 5 If you can't be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.
- 6 If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.
- 7 It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to serve as a warning to others.
- 8 Never buy a car you can't push.
- 9 Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on.
- 10 Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.
- 11 Since it's the early worm that gets eaten by the bird, sleep late.
- 12 The second mouse gets the cheese.
- 13 When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- 14 Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.
- 15 Some mistakes are too much fun to make only once.

- 16 We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box.
- 17 A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.
- 18 Have an awesome day and know that someone has thought about you today.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY

- 19 Save the earth. It's the only planet with chocolate on it.

NEW INEXPENSIVE DENTAL TREATMENT



Silver diamine fluoride is a liquid that can be painted on teeth to stop decay. Fast, low-cost and pain-free, the treatment is rapidly gaining momentum nationwide as the cavity treatment of choice for patients who can't easily get a filling, such as the very young or the very old. Because of insurance gaps and the prohibitive cost of most dental treatments, many older adults miss out on preventive care to stave

off dental decay, putting them at risk for dental disease that can trigger serious health problems. Kaiser Health News, Sept. 15.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STRETCHING

When you get older, your tissues are much less flexible, even fragile," says Meredith Hinds Harris, professor emeritus and former head of the physical therapy department at Northeastern University in Boston.

"Without warming up and stretching, just one wrong way or quick movement, and you are likely to tear something because of your inflexibility."

If you cross train, says Hinds Harris, a triathlete, "you might be able to do less stretching," because you aren't working the same muscles constantly as you do when you focus on just running or just biking, for instance.

Stretching doesn't have to eat up a lot of time. Ty Palmer, assistant professor of kinesiology at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, found that just a minute of stretching the hamstrings (four 15-second bouts) reduced stiffness in his small study of 11 older men, average age 69.

"A decrease in stiffness leads to better balance," Palmer says. And that, in turn, could reduce the chance of falls and injury. You don't need all day to stretch, either.

"Keep it short," Palmer suggests. "Limit it to less than five minutes for the session."

www.nextavenue.org/stretching-as-you-age/

EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF PARKINSON'S

At the moment, doctors can only diagnose Parkinson's disease after symptoms occur. That's a problem considering the

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

damage has already been done by the time symptoms show up.

But there is good news: University of Pennsylvania scientists have discovered a new way to identify alpha-synuclein, the hallmark protein of Parkinson's. By uncovering a technique for identifying these proteins within the body, it could allow scientists to diagnose Parkinson's before symptoms arise.

www.optimistdaily.com

IMPORTANCE OF PROTEIN INTAKE

As we age, our bodies need more "repair." Protein is a great way to protect our bodies from the deterioration of aging and keep us energized.

The 2018 Framingham Heart Study recommended that healthy older adults consume 1 to 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily and that seniors with acute or chronic diseases, protein intake could be increased 1.2 to 1.5 grams per kilogram of body weight.

Consult with your doctor to make sure you're meeting your daily protein goals! Pistachios and hemp hearts offers 6 and

10 grams of protein per serving respectively and are easy to integrate into salads, oatmeal, and smoothies. Eggs are another great choice. Just one egg provides 6 grams of protein and they're high in choline, a cognition-supporting nutrient. Seafood is another great choice, especially if you're looking to boost omega-3 intake too.

<https://www.optimist-daily.com/>

WHEN TO HAVE YOUR MORNING JO

While it may be tempting to drink coffee the moment you get out of bed, a new study from the University of Bath suggests that may not be the best idea.

Apparently, when you drink a strong coffee first thing in the morning, you impair the body's glucose response. This limits your body's ability to effectively tolerate sugar in breakfast and can affect overall metabolic and blood sugar control, especially if you slept badly the night before. In the study, those who drank coffee after having breakfast didn't suffer from such blood sugar problems, suggesting it's wiser for you to avoid drinking coffee before you eat.

"Put simply, our blood sugar control is impaired when the

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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first thing our bodies come into contact with is coffee especially after a night of disrupted sleep,” said James Betts, the corresponding author of the new study. “We might improve this by eating first and then drinking coffee later if we feel we still need it. Knowing this can have important health benefits for us all.”

<https://newatlas.com/health-wellbeing/coffee-before-after-breakfast-glucose-insulin-metabolism/>

A GROWING TOLL ON CAREGIVERS

Nearly four years after her longtime partner’s death, Michelle Murphy still wakes in a panic, imagining that she forgot to help him breathe.

At 61, Jeffrey Senne was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also called Lou Gehrig’s disease. Murphy had become his main financial support and caregiver in their woodsy Northern California home. She ended up devoting 11 years to looking after him.

As the disease progressed, Senne, who Murphy says once looked like Harrison Ford, grew bald and frail, lost control of his bowels and could no longer speak or swallow. To prevent him from suffocating, she would have to wake up at least every two hours to suction the saliva pooling in his mouth.

“I was terrified that he’d die on my watch,” she says.

Hypervigilance often comes with the job for the more than 17.7 million Americans who care for older and disabled family members. So does stress, anxiety and long-term harm to the caregivers’ physical and financial health.

In recent years, the work of caregiving has been lasting longer and becoming more

complicated — and as America’s population ages and becomes more disabled, many more of us will be taking it on. Although state and local governments have begun to try to lighten the burden, they could and should be doing much more, experts say.

“Many people know there’s a reasonably high possibility they’ll occupy this job at some point, but they have no idea how profoundly it will affect their lives,” says Richard Schulz, a psychiatrist at the University of Pittsburgh and a national expert on family caregiving.

In a recent article in the Annual Review of Psychology, Schulz and four colleagues reviewed the research on family caregiving for the disabled and ill elderly, outlining the enormous toll on caregivers and potential ways to help them.

Caregivers like Murphy take on many tasks: shopping and housework; helping with bathing, dressing and monitoring medicines; managing outside care; making financial decisions; and navigating the fragmented health-care system to find quality, affordable extra care.

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!

Increasingly, they're also providing the kinds of medical support once delivered mainly by trained and licensed professionals, such as cleaning wounds and dealing with feeding and drainage tubes and catheters, because many insurance plans do not cover such care.

As time goes by and the care recipient's health deteriorates, the work becomes harder and drearier. And the more that caregivers feel the role is involuntary, the more vulnerable they are to depression.

A review of 151 studies of caregivers' health found changes in biological markers of stress, including higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol and C-reactive protein, a marker of harmful chronic inflammation. Caregivers also showed impaired immune function and worsened cognitive performance, and spouses caring for partners with dementia showed heightened risk of heart disease.

Caregiving can shorten life spans: In a group of 392 men and women ages 66 to 96 who were caring for their elderly spouses, carers were 63% more likely to die over the next four years than a similar group not providing such care.

Money worries often add to the burden, especially for women, who make up 60% of family caregivers, usually during the peak of their earning power. Nearly half of caregivers who take time off from work report reduced income due to fewer hours,

Can You Help?

You may make a donation to ENH through our fiscal agent, Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. which is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation.

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.

missed promotions and sometimes loss of jobs.

On average, a woman 50 or older who leaves the workforce to care for an aging parent will lose more than \$324,000 in wages and retirement savings.

Even trained professionals can find themselves unprepared. Harvard psychiatrist Arthur Kleinman spent a decade caring for his wife, Joan, after she was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's disease, but was frustrated by how little support the couple received from doctors or the health-care system.

"None of them knew how to talk to me about what I could expect as time went on," he says. "They simply weren't trained for any of that."

The long-predicted "silver tsunami" now gathering force makes it all the more urgent to ramp up meaningful support for family caregivers.

By 2030, 72.8 million U.S. residents — more than 1 in 5 — will be 65 or older, with rapid growth in the number of the "oldest old": those over 80. Meanwhile, the number of potential caregivers is declining as fewer people have children, more couples divorce and more women join the workforce.

To cope with this oncoming crisis, Schulz says that health care and social service providers must begin by identifying and vetting family caregivers: listing them in patients' electronic records, assessing their abilities and making sure they

understand the tasks they're taking on. Only then can the health system start to take meaningful steps to help them.

Katherine Ellison, The Washington Post

Tech Tips

**A SENIOR-FRIENDLY
TABLET+**

Music is a powerful thing: Not only does it help people of all ages preserve and enjoy memories, but studies have also shown that music can help manage conditions like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, and reduce depression and anxiety in older adults.

GrandPad, creator of the first purpose-built tablet designed for older adults, has expanded the device's capabilities with a free radio streaming service, giving seniors the ability to listen to local AM/FM radio stations. It is a part of GrandPad's growing array of senior-friendly apps, games, and entertainment features designed to keep users engaged and connected. In addition to radio stations, GrandPad users also have access to a curated music collection from which they can customize playlists to their personal preferences.

"Research has shown that music is incredibly powerful in stimulating cognition and reducing isolation and depression," said Scott Lien, co-founder and CEO of GrandPad. "By adding the streaming radio capability, we're also giving seniors the ability to tune in to live radio stations that can keep them connected to their hometowns or to topics they find entertaining and educational."

GrandPad is a subscription service which has been specifically designed around the input of seniors, for their specific needs and technology capabilities.

GETTING WISE TO FAKE NEWS

The MediaWise for Seniors program will offer two free online courses, funded in large part by, well, Facebook. The first four-week course has already filled up, but students can still enroll in a self-directed course on separating online fact from fiction. Hosted by Christiane Amanpour and Joan Lunden, it is scheduled to begin Oct.

"By the end, they'll be using the techniques used by fact-checkers across the world," including reverse image searches to determine the sources of photos and videos, said Alex Mahadevan, senior multimedia reporter at Poynter.

In addition, Poynter has worked with AARP to produce Fact Tracker interactive videos on spotting and filtering misinformation.

The News Literacy Project is also expanding beyond its initial target audience of middle and high school students.

Although the project is aiming its new efforts at the general population, "our hope is that older adults will be major consumers of these resources and become part of the information solution, instead of the misinformation problem," said Alan Miller, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who founded the project in 2008.

Take its free site called Checkology. "It gives you a grounding in how to discern credible information," Mr. Miller said. "It helps people detect the difference between news, opinion and propaganda." Students will also learn about quality journalism interactively, by playing the role of a

RAISE YOUR VOICE!

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

reporter gathering information on deadline and an editor deciding which stories merit the front page.

A weekly newsletter, *Get Smart About News*, will take aim at current rumors, hoaxes and conspiracy theories, starting Sept. 22. In a game app called *Informable*, players advance through increasingly challenging levels to develop fact-checking and other digital literacy skills. Simultaneously, public service ads will appear on radio and TV stations and on Facebook.

STAY SAFE

STOP. THINK. CONNECT.™, in partnership with Cyber-Seniors, wants to make sure everyone has a safe and enjoyable experience while online. We have a few tips that will help as you learn how to use new technology.

Lock your devices, like your tablet and phone

You lock the front door to your house, and you should do the same with your devices. Use strong passphrases or passcodes to lock your tablet and phone. Securing your devices keeps prying eyes out and can help protect your information in case your devices are lost or stolen.

Think before you act

Ignore emails or communications that create a sense of urgency and require you to respond to a crisis, such as a problem with your bank account or taxes. This type of message is likely a scam.

When in doubt, throw it out

Clicking on links in emails are often how bad guys get access to personal information. If an email looks weird, even if you know the person who sent it, it's best to delete.

Make your passphrase a sentence

A strong passphrase is a sentence that is at least 12 characters long. Focus on positive sentences or phrases that you like to think about and are easy to remember (for example, "I love country music."). On many sites, you can even use spaces!

Unique account, unique passphrase

Having separate passphrases for every account helps to thwart cybercriminals. At a minimum, separate your work and personal accounts and make sure that your critical accounts have the strongest passphrases.

Write it down and keep it safe

Everyone can forget a passphrase. Keep a list that's stored in a safe, secure place away from your computer.

National Cyber Security Alliance

Dollars & Sense

SHOULD SENIORS CONSIDER A REVERSE MORTGAGE NOW?

Massive job losses, a volatile stock market and low interest rates caused by the coronavirus pandemic has caused many cash-strapped retirees to consider a reverse mortgage. But there's a lot to consider to be sure it's a good option

A reverse mortgage can be a tool to provide cash in retirement, but it's important to proceed with caution.

U.S. News & World Report, Sept. 16.

SOCIAL SECURITY COLA

The 68 million people – including retirees, as well as disabled people and others – who rely on Social Security are likely to receive a 1.3% cost-of-living adjustment next year because of paltry inflation, according to an estimate by the Senior Citizens League, an advocacy group.

For the average retiree who got a check of \$1,517 this year, that would mean an additional \$19.70 a month.

USA Today

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AND TAXES

Some retirees may be surprised to learn that a portion of their Social Security benefits could be subject to federal income taxes.

(<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10035.pdf>) The rules are complicated. But about 40% of people who get Social Security have to pay income taxes on their benefits and the higher your income, the more you will pay. If you're single and have what's known as "combined income" over \$34,000 in 2020, up to 85% of your Social Security benefits is subject to tax. For married couples filing jointly, the threshold is \$44,000. Combined income includes adjusted gross income from your federal tax return plus half of your Social Security benefits plus any tax-exempt interest earned on municipal bonds.

Next Avenue

BARGAIN SHOPPING

The Dollar Store, Dollar General and others offer low cost items including brand names. Some items worth considering include: Greeting Cards, Ibuprofen products, band aids, brand name cosmetics, lip balms, cleaning supplies, candy, party supplies and seasonal decorations. Reading labels and checking expiration dates is always advisable.

HOW TO FIND A LOST PENSION PLAN

Some people lose track of their pension plan from an old job. A company might merge with or be bought by another

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

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

company and change its name, move to a new location in a different city or go out of business. When this happens, your pension is not necessarily lost, but it might take a little research to find it. <https://money.usnews.com/money/retirement/baby-boomers/articles/how-to-find-a-lost-pension-plan>.

COULD YOU BE A TARGET FOR CYBERCRIME?

Understanding the potential threats can help keep your online accounts safe.

You've likely spent a good deal of time thinking about investment risk. But have you stopped to think about more personal security issues, such as the safety of your online financial transactions and information stored on your computers? While most people recognize that online fraud or cybercrime is a potential threat, few know how or why they may be at risk. Cybercrime can take many forms, and understanding who the enemies are and how they commit crimes may allow you to better defend yourself.

The "Bad Guy"

Economic cybercriminals pose the greatest online risk to your family's personal financial data and assets. Make no mistake, many of these thieves are highly skilled and sophisticated. They may be individuals or coordinated groups that use technology to steal. For most of us, cybercrime can best be described as an extension of traditional criminal activity focused on personal financial data and monetary theft.

How do cybercriminals operate?

Indiscriminate targeting

In some cases, cybercriminals cast a wide net with "phishing" scams, among others, and hope the sheer quantity of potential victims will yield sufficient economic benefit (see "The makings of a cybercrime," below, for more details on how cybercriminals attack).

Specific victim targeting

A growing and more concerning trend is the specific targeting of high-net-worth individuals. In many of these cases, criminals spend a great deal of time and effort identifying a worthwhile target and then developing a victim profile based on public and private information—such as property records, credit information obtained via hacking, and posted details on social networks—with the goal of stealing assets from financial accounts.

Although the actual criminal act can take several forms, the basic steps are often similar. Below is a relatively common scenario:

Step 1: The thief sends an email with a link or attachment to the victim that appears to come from a known party. The targeted victim then clicks the link or attachment, which includes malicious software (malware) that infects the victim's computer.

Step 2: The thief uses installed malware to steal login credentials to the victim's financial accounts or to remotely control the victim's computer. This will generally allow the thief to log in as the victim.

Step 3: With access to accounts, the thief changes the victim's profile at the financial institution and/or impersonates the victim and moves money to criminal accounts at a different institution.

That's the bad news. The good news is that with some simple steps, you can

improve your defenses and reduce your vulnerability to this type of crime. Contact your financial company to learn how to keep your accounts safe.

Fidelity.com

Laugh & Live Longer

COVID QUOTES

Yesterday I ran out of soap and body wash and all I could find was dish detergent. Then it dawned on me!

I never thought the comment "I wouldn't touch them with a six-foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!

This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog—we laughed a lot!

Day 121 at home and the dog is looking at me like, "See? This is why I chew the furniture!"

Q&A:

Q. As you grow older, do you tend to gesture more or less with your hands while talking?

I needed to do the laundry, but then I realized I was out of detergent, so I went to write a shopping list and realized how unorganized the junk drawer was, and started checking pens for ink. When I went to toss all the junk, I saw that the trash was full but before I took it out I wanted to get rid of old food in the fridge. That's when I realized a juice jug had leaked so I needed to clean it up but when I went to grab a rag, I saw that the pantry closet was a nightmare so I started organizing it. And that's how I ended up on the floor looking at my old photo albums from 1990's and not doing laundry.

A. Rose Marie: You ask me one more growing old question Peter, and I'll give you a gesture you'll never forget.

FOR THE GRANDKIDS

"Why do fish live in saltwater?"

Because pepper makes them sneeze!

"Why is 6 afraid of 7?"

Because 7 ate 9!

"What do you call a snowman in the summer?"

A puddle!

"What do you call cheese that's not yours?"

Nacho cheese!

FUNNY VIDEO

<https://biggeekdad.com/2020/09/grand-parents-gone-wild/>



**FREDA SPIRO,
MERRIMACK COUNTY**

Freda is a perfect example of the hundreds of unsung volunteers. She does not fill the more highly publicized leadership jobs. That is not her nature. She is the classic follower - dependable, available, and essential. What makes Freda stand out is her very long-term commitment to volunteerism in general. And the second thing that makes her stand out is the variety of her interests and support. For example, I cannot recount the ways that she furthers literacy – both for children and adults. And she walks the walk on that one in that she has been an active and involved member of several book clubs.

Followers and essential volunteers who will do any job in an organization are the cement that holds the bricks of the

organization together. Of course, it takes leadership to verbalize the mission of the group. But it is the quiet and essential workmanship of the followers who make the mission a success.

Here is a list of her good works: Works as an organizer and support person at the naturalization ceremonies at the Federal Court in Concord. Her parents moved to the United States from Albania and she has great empathy for the new citizens and their families. Freda:

1. Works for the local Friendly Kitchen serving free meals to those in need. She also solicits local restaurants for donations.
2. Works one morning a week at the Rundlett Middle School office making and answering phone calls and doing other tasks.
3. Works with volunteers at the Franklin Pierce Manse, an historic home in Concord. She serves on the planning committee, distributes public relations posters, works in the cemetery at the President's grave, and any other jobs which need doing.
4. Volunteers for the Merrimack Valley Retired Educators organization. For years she served as call person of the lunch roster. She is the liaison person to ensures the group's restaurant accommodation and attends the lunches.
5. Was chosen by the Concord School District as one of the school Volunteers of the Year represented Concord in the state "competition."
6. Keeps a regular of schedule of visits to nursing homes, former teachers, members of her church, former neighbors and friends.
7. For decades, served on the Alumni Association at her alma mater, Keene

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 |

8. State College and reported the deaths of former students.
9. As a faithful parishioner at her Concord church, she volunteers at fund-raising events, donates cash and other needed items, and supports the missions of church members.
10. For decades, was a blood donor, even to the time when she "aged out" of giving. She is a supporter of the Concord Hospital, its Payson Cancer Center and activities sponsored by the Center.
11. For a number of years, volunteered weekly in a Concord kindergarten class. Her slowing mobility stopped her "special time with the little ones."
12. Serves the Concord High School Class of 1953 on the annual luncheon planning committee, the scholarship committee, and thanks class members for scholarship donations.
13. As a long-time member of the Friends of the Audi (the City Auditorium in Concord), she makes regular donations, supports special fund-raising efforts, volunteers at the special service days of cleaning, prepares publicity materials, and refurbishes the performing hall.
14. In her earlier years, Freda served as a driver and companion for a number of folks who may have had doctor's appointments at offices and hospitals outside of Concord.
15. Joined the effort of the Blossom Hill Cemetery custodians in their efforts to improve the gravesites of the unnamed buried there and sponsors one of the grave sites.
16. Donates three full days of clerical work when the Christmas Food Program is distributing the boxes of food to needy Concord area families.
17. Served as receptionist at the Concord Hospital main visitors' entrance every Sunday night for over 25 years.
18. For 20 years of more, served as a supervisor of the check list at the local polls. A move to Havenwood changed her eligibility for that position.
19. Served on the Mayor's Breakfast committee, working to eliminate racism of all kinds and encourage multicultural activities in the city.
20. Created and maintained flower gardens in front of Conant School.

Freda has no immediate family members closer than 2500 miles away. Her family is her community to whom she is generous every day.

“In these dark and uncertain times, there can be great value in imagining a bit of star in each human soul. Not just that it gives some hope for humanity at a time when man’s inhumanity to man seems ever on the increase; but also, because it points to an inner brightness that can light the way in dark times.”

Michael Meade

Board Notes

TRANSITIONS

There is something so comforting and restorative about traditions. The consistency, expectancy and joy that holiday traditions especially bring. But this year, Thanksgiving traditions are in transition from no Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade to disruptions in those after-dinner football

games. We can feel unsettled, disappointed, and sad, and at the same time, we can find new ways to bring a sense of comfort.

As older adults, we have been through many of life’s transitions and weathered chaos and uncertainty, which may explain why we have the capacity for bringing calm in the chaotic times. A 2016 study showed that despite the physical changes as we age, older people are actually happier than younger adults. Older people are much better able to brush off life’s small stressors and accumulate a valuable thing called wisdom: being emotionally stable and compassionate, knowing ourselves and being able to make smart social decisions.

The young kids in our lives are coping with instability in ways we could never have

imagined when we were school age. And whether we are in person or virtual in our connects with these youngsters, we have an opportunity to bring our emotional stability to them. How many ways can we be creative about sharing that gift? With young kids, we could play a version of “I spy.” I spy something that makes me happy, or that I like, or that makes me laugh. For older kids, we could compare transitions to software upgrades and teach some history at the same time! If the American Revolution is America 1.0, what number would you give these times?

Let’s play games that bring about moments of stability in these challenging times. Let’s remember the gifts we bring to the table. And let’s give thanks for one another and all the wonderful things that we’ve seen over the past few months.

And last, but not least, share your stories with us.