



A Citizen Voice for the  
Aging Experience

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[engagingnh@gmail.com](mailto:engagingnh@gmail.com)

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

# ENGAGING NH NEWS

## Three Ways to Prevent Senior Loneliness

by Kristin Hicks

*Physical* problems are good at making themselves known. You have a clear pain in a specific part of your body that you can describe to the doctor to get the treatment you need. Some seniors might not do a great job of letting their caregivers know about all their pains, but for the most part physical pains are problems that are easy to spot.

*Emotional* problems are more complicated. Many seniors come from an era where they were taught not to complain much, or even to see mental health issues as something to be ashamed of. If they feel isolated and alone, it can be easy to decide it's their own problem and they'd better just deal with it without complaining. But loneliness (and its very serious companion depression) can be as deadly as many physical ailments if not treated properly.

### Senior Loneliness is Common

Some who have covered the subject of senior isolation are prone to refer to it as a "loneliness epidemic." There's something to that – the numbers of people affected are significant. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 11 million people over 65 – that's over a *third* of the total – live alone.

Living alone in and of itself doesn't mean a senior will suffer from the devastating effects of loneliness. Those that get out and participate in social activities, see their family members and friends regularly, and make the effort to stay in contact with other people don't have much to worry about. But as age

*Many experts compare the health risks of loneliness to those of obesity and smoking*

makes mobility more difficult, limits transportation options, and takes more and more of a senior's loved ones away in death, the risks grow.

### *The Health Effects of Loneliness*

Researchers have started to find evidence for what many people in the geriatric profession have long known to be true – loneliness can seriously limit a person's life span, not to mention their quality of life in its last years. A 2012 study showed a *link between social isolation and higher rates of mortality* for people over 52.

That should be troubling enough, but that's not all. Loneliness:

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- Causes raised blood pressure in seniors over 50
- Has a negative influence on cognitive performance
- Can make people more susceptible to viruses like the flu
- Increases the risk of Alzheimer's

Many experts compare the health risks of loneliness to those of obesity and smoking. It's becoming widely regarded as a health risk that's just as dangerous, but far less discussed.

### 3 Ways to Prevent Loneliness

Once you understand how dangerous loneliness can be, the question becomes how to ward it off. Tapping into any community you already have is recommended, but you might consider suggesting some of these options to the seniors you care about to help add some new social interactions to life.

#### 1. Pursue new social activities.

See if there's a meetup or club in your area that focuses on something they're interested in. If getting there is an issue, reach out to others in the group to find out if carpooling is an option. Whether it's water aerobics classes at the local YMCA, a knitting club, or getting more involved in church activities, making sure to put some social gatherings on the calendar will mean increasing the amount of contact a senior has with other people.

#### 2. Volunteer.

Research local volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Match make it

## 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.*

easy to peruse the causes that could use some extra help and find one that's a good fit for what your loved one cares about. Not only will they meet new people, they'll get that fulfilling feeling that comes with doing something meaningful.

#### 3. Adopt a pet.

Research shows that pets are good for our health. They decrease the risk of depression, help bring blood pressure and cholesterol rates down, and reduce stress levels – in short, they help counteract all those bad things loneliness can cause. Many shelters offer senior-to-senior pet adoption programs, so you can skip dealing with potty training and just enjoy the companionship of an animal that needs love too.

Loneliness can creep up on seniors if it's allowed to. Keeping it at bay requires some proactive effort, but it can be done. Look into the resources in your community that can help and sit down and get some actual plans on the calendar to make sure they happen.

*Kristin Hicks, Senior Advisor.Com*

## NH Updates

### VOTER FRAUD IN NH CLAIM

“Let me as be unequivocal as possible-allegations of voter fraud in NH are baseless, without any merit-it's shameful to spread these fantasies,” tweeted Tom Rath, a prominent New Hampshire Republican who worked on the presidential campaigns of former President George W. Bush and 2012 presidential nominee Mitt Romney.

(Note: A new solar-powered handheld voting machine should help prevent election fraud in Nigeria. The device uses biometrics such as facial recognition and thumbprint scans to register the voter into the system, and then stores the results in the cloud to keep track of any attempts to manipulate the system.

The small size of the machine also marks a substantial improvement in making voting more accessible to all communities, including those in remote areas. The increased speed of voting electronically could also help prevent the

manipulation of results, something that's been a major issue in Nigeria)

## THE 2017 UNH AGE OF CHAMPIONS

Come to the UNH Age of Champions event on Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the UNH Field House in Durham from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm and celebrate longevity! This FREE event promotes and raises awareness regarding healthy aging from a holistic perspective.

This year's event will consist of "Opening Ceremonies" featuring keynote and musician Stan Davis and "Inspirational Awards" honoring 3 local community members for their healthy aging lifestyle. The health fair portion will be interactive with assessments, raffles, demonstrations, and opportunities to attend a quick movement class. Vendors include students presenting from their course work, community agencies and businesses all dedicated to healthy aging. We hope to see all of you there! Come and experience the dividends of aging!

<http://chhs.unh.edu/cacl/age-champions>

## NOW AVAILABLE

### *2016 New Hampshire Statewide Coordination of Community Transportation Services Plan*

Here is the link to the new Plan. See what is happening in your community:

[https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scc/documents/nh\\_final\\_20170131.pdf](https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scc/documents/nh_final_20170131.pdf)

## Nominations Wanted

EngAGING NH and the NH State Committee on Aging are pleased to announce that we are soliciting nominations for the 55<sup>th</sup> annual Joseph D. Vaughan awards.

This joint effort is to recognize individuals or couples over the age of 60 who demonstrate outstanding leadership or meritorious achievement as volunteers on behalf of New Hampshire's older citizens and others. Direct service to and/or advocacy for **older citizens** is an essential but not an exclusive requirement. Nominees must be residents of New Hampshire whose volunteer work is in the Granite State.

A joint committee of EngAGING NH, the NH State Committee on Aging, and a member of the Vaughan family review all nominations and select one person or a couple from each county to be honored. Recipients will be recognized in a ceremony highlighting their accomplishments.

The awards ceremony is scheduled for May 1, 2017 at the State House in the Executive Council Chambers. Invited guest invited to participate in the presentation of the awards include the Vaughan, Governor Christopher T. Sununu and Commissioner Jeffrey Meyers.

The Joseph D. Vaughan Award was initiated in 1962 to memorialize the Honorable Joseph D. Vaughan. A New Hampshire legislator, Representative Vaughan was an early advocate for older residents of the state and was instrumental in creating a state agency dedicated to the wellbeing of older people.

For a copy of the nomination form, go to

<http://www.engagingnh.org/vaughan-awards.html>

**ALL Nominations must be received no later than March 10, 2017. Emailed nominations are preferred.**

Nominations may be emailed to [engagingnh@gmail.com](mailto:engagingnh@gmail.com) or they may be mailed via the USPS to:

THE VAUGHAN AWARDS COMMITTEE  
c/o Roger Vachon  
19 Centerwood Drive  
Concord, NH 03301

Nominations are acknowledged within 72 hours of receipt.

**In the absence of acknowledgment, please call Roger at 603-223-6903.**

## EXCITING NEWS! COMPLETE STREETS TOOLKIT NOW AVAILABLE

As interest and support for complete streets continues to spread across New Hampshire, it is the hope that a new Complete Streets toolkit becomes a well utilized tool. We encourage and hope that state and local agencies recognize the toolkit as a resource and provide a link to it via their websites. The toolkit is loaded with hyperlinks throughout the document, providing endless browsing opportunity for anyone interested to research the various topics within complete streets including benefits, history, who's incorporating them, policy, design and engineering, and pilot programs.

[http://www.snhpc.org/pdf/SNHPC CompleteStreetsToolkit2017.pdf](http://www.snhpc.org/pdf/SNHPC%20CompleteStreetsToolkit2017.pdf)

*Sylvia von Aulock*

### From Our Readers

#### WHY I MISS OLD PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE

Living in New York and working in advertising I rarely see people over the age of fifty.

My elders seem to be a secret population -- a growing, sizable, increasingly healthy and wealthy group -- that I'm never exposed to, let alone have the pleasure of working alongside. This is one of the worst things about working in Marketing right now.

As an industry we're obsessed with youth, we're endlessly trying to get "upwardly mobile Millenni-

als" or "hard to reach youthful influencers" or some nonsensical and largely broke crowd who can't afford the premium SUV we have on offer. Meanwhile we've not looked around the BA First Lounge or the Hyatt Hotel lobby, or the Emirates Business class cabin to see that all the people with money and influence are actually rather old. And wise.

Occasionally, on the rare events where I get to listen to some of the wonderful old folk of advertising, it quickly makes me realize how much we as an industry suffer from a lack of wisdom. We have incredible levels of vision, an abundance of precociousness, brilliant creativity, but as an industry we pretty much have no wisdom at all.

It's a problem, but it takes wisdom to realize how important wisdom is, so we don't notice it. And for many young leaders, how can you miss something you've never experienced?

It started to happen in the early 2000s -- expensive, wise people that hadn't grown up with Blackberries and expected long lunches and business class seats that didn't get open plan offices, were slowly removed from the business. We didn't notice it for quite some time because we were too busy playing with our new toys -- the internet, the banner ad, the microsite, and the iPhone. We had rallying cries to get digital folk on the pitch team. We'd fly hapless 24-year-olds around the world to ensure we had the voice of youth on the team, but we abandoned the voice of context.

It's now been such a long time that we've completely forgotten what it's like to have someone in the room who objectively knows more. Who, while earning the big bucks (that it's hard to explain to our clients) understands real clients' issues, and who above all else, can see the changes in business and marketing in the context of decades of what has happened before. These days we lazily assume that things have changed & their knowledge would be out of date now, what can we possibly learn from someone who may happen to have a 16 year old daughter, and therefore probably has a more intimate understanding of contemporary behavior than anyone.

Instead we get mobile marketing experts, who with their six years of experience are seen as mobile advertising opinion leaders. And how can they not be? They've lived this stuff for three times longer than anyone else. We get social media gurus who seem to just be people, with the same common sense as everyone else, but with fewer more important skills to leverage.

It's gotten to the point that it's now possible to be in a room with 400 agency employees, earning tens of millions of dollars in revenue, without a single person who can remember the advertising world pre-mobile days, let alone pre-computer.

As a result we've faced a growing vicious cycle of problems:

- We lack gravitas and business sense

- We think everything is new
- We don't see change in context

It's undeniable that our generation is going through more profound change, at a faster rate than ever before. Entire business models are being disrupted, and as the world of advertising is also changing, yes, sticking to old-world thinking is totally the wrong way forward.

However, we need to carefully ensure that we understand these changes in context. We need to establish what aspects are changing and what aspects are fundamental. We need to understand what is a fad and what is a cultural shift. And what would really help do that would be a wise person of a certain age who understands change -- someone not trying to build a career on an Advertising Week stage with a nonsensical sound byte that resonates with people who don't know better.

And older, wiser, smarter people, please chip in. Please don't ever think you're not exactly what we need. Don't be intimidated by the talk of change, the buzzwords, raise your hand and join the debate. Embrace the new, see what really has changed. Flex your mobile muscles, think about what streaming really means. Your in-

stincts are right, your input is needed, please don't let anyone suggest otherwise.

For more, go to:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-i-miss-old-people-workplace-tom-goodwin>

*Tom Goodwin, 2/12/17*

### SENIOR CENTERS SPRING CONFERENCE

Save the date for the NH Association of Senior Centers' Spring Conference on Friday, May 12 at GoodLife Programs and Activities in Concord.

The date has been changed so that we may gather, support and inspire one another during "Older American's Month" in May.

The theme is "Supporting YOU Supporting Seniors". So mark your calendar now and plan to spend the day learning, networking and supporting your peers in the work that we all do to make the lives of older adults better.

A brochure will be email and mailed in March. Members \$25/Non-Member \$50. Please feel free to email or call with any questions. Or check out our new website at <http://www.nhasc.org/>

*Brinn Sullivan*

### NOW THAT'S COMMUNITY

I received a call from Prescott Oil this morning. Their driver reported that Mom didn't come to the door as usual when he delivered propane and they were checking up on her.

CC

## Focus on Community

*In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it.*

*- Marianne Williamson -*

### "LIGHT" TO HELP FRAIL SENIORS STAY AT HOME

The Local Interdisciplinary Geriatric Homecare Team (LIGHT) brings together a community nurse, a long-term care counselor and an outreach worker to help as many as 20 seniors at any one time with everything from medication management to getting help with food and utility bills to long-term care planning.

The goal is to keep these seniors living at home for as long as possible – and it costs the clients nothing.

"It's been a lifesaver for frail elders in Lebanon who are struggling to live on their own," said Roberta Berner, executive director of the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council. "It's a one-of-a-kind program in New Hampshire."

It is another example of how communities are working to support the state's rapidly aging population. A team meets weekly to talk about their clients. Some of the clients are referred by Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and others by the Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital in Lebanon. Others contact LIGHT directly, Conklin said. The team makes house calls and helps clients with their overall wellness.

### 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](mailto:engagingnh@gmail.com)

Their “wellness” includes many aspects, from their physical health to their living situation to emotional support. They also help find seniors new living arrangements if they cannot stay at home. Some clients only need temporary support with things like medication management, while others have needed assistance for a year or longer. The team also has cleared “a real hurdle” by being able to talk to medical providers directly about their clients’ care.

Funding for LIGHT has come in pieces since it began as a pilot program three years ago. Berner compared the LIGHT program to the Support and Services at Home (SASH) program in Vermont, which currently is receiving Medicare funding as a model program for other states. The difference between LIGHT and SASH is that LIGHT provides services at home, while SASH stations an around-the-clock nurse and outreach worker at federally funded elderly housing complexes.

According to the Centers for Medicare Services, SASH has been proven to reduce Medicare and Medicaid spending. Medicare spends between \$700 and \$1,000 per year per senior on the program, but SASH estimates it saves about \$1,536 year per patient, according to a 2014 study of the program. It also found the seniors experienced fewer trips to the emergency room. Medicare has funding available to federally funded elderly complexes in all states as a result of the success of SASH.

## ***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 and 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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“In a rural area, we thought it might be better not to have it at senior housing but to have it in the community,” Berner said. She also believes the program is unique in New Hampshire and says Lebanon may be on the only community in the state that pays for an outreach worker.

“Funding has been so stagnant and reduced over the last decade that a lot of programs don’t have the funding to make this happen,” she said.

For more information on the LIGHT program, contact Jane Conklin at 448-1558. -

See more at:

<http://www.unionleader.com/Silver-Linings:-In-Lebanon,-finding-the-LIGHT-to-help-frail-seniors-stay-at-home#sthash.R06oc7LP.dpuf>

*Gretchen M. Grosky, NH Union Leader, 2/27/17*

## PORTLAND NURSING HOME TAKES CUE FROM INTER-GENERATIONAL DUTCH PROGRAM

A Maine nursing home has embarked on an innovative concept blending seniors, their families, and college students in a unique, shared living community.

It’s based on an incredible program in the Netherlands. Nursing students live alongside residents in nursing homes. The program requires each student to work a minimum 16 hours a week as a CNA or Neighborhood Assistant at \$11 to \$12 an hour. As for the housing? Arguably nicer than many

dorms. A close connection students is forge with residents.

<http://www.wcsh6.com/news/health>

## HOW TO CREATE A SHARED-SPACE SOLUTION

Sometimes, only two people would show up for a meal. The senior center wanted to relocate, but municipal funds and land within Swampscott's 3.05 square miles were limited. A new, stand-alone senior center was not in the cards. Meanwhile, the town's public schools were overcrowded. A new high school was needed.

Fast forward to today: Swampscott, Massachusetts — population 14,000 — now has both the senior center and the high school it long needed. In fact, the two facilities share a plot of land and are essentially one, with the ground-level senior center occupying a 7,500-square-foot space that's attached to the high school.

The Swampscott Senior Center on Boston's North Shore was ailing. Housed in an old Victorian house, the center had three flights of stairs and limited on-street parking. The only handicap accessible area was in the windowless basement, where the staff served lunch and offered bingo and exercise

class twice a week.

By combining a high school and a senior center, the town of Swampscott, Massachusetts, saved money and served residents of many ages.

<http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities>

## LINKING LIVES THROUGH BREAKING BREAD

Everyone cares about food. Our health -- our very survival -- hinges on what we know about nutrition, food safety and food preparation. Yet the importance of food goes well beyond physical nourishment. Cooking and eating are social activities that bring people together despite differences in community standing, cultural background and age.

Food is at the heart of “community.” Just visit any soup kitchen or homeless shelter during a holiday event. The volunteers who chip in to help cook and serve meals nourish a sense of community -- for themselves and their neighbors. Think too of the elaborate planning that goes into the meal served at a wedding reception, or the sanctity of grandma's Sunday dinners. For many of us, special occasions mean special foods that taste even better when shared with family and friends.

Food is also a vital part of cultural experience. Any journey into cultural heritage -- one's own or those of others -- is likely to leave vivid memories of smells and tastes. The well-organized cultural food fair is an example of how food can be used to create a sense of cultural appreciation. And why not start young? Early childhood centers

**Raise Your Voice!**

**Please let us know  
what's on your  
mind and what's  
important to you.**

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such as Penn State's Bennett Family Center draw on the cultural diversity of its families by hosting potluck dinners with foods from many different countries.

"Jams and Jellies with Kids," a program offered by Lancaster County Cooperative Extension, uses food as a tool to teach children about cultural traditions.

"Lancaster is very traditional and has a strong heritage of food preservation," says extension agent Nancy Wiker, who conducts the hands-on canning workshop. "The program enhances this tradition and builds on the county's strong emphasis on family. Families are looking for activities that children and adults can do together. They go home with a jar of jam and a shared memory."

Food can also be used to promote understanding and sharing between unrelated young people and older adults. York County extension agent Marcia Weber describes "Kids in the Kitchen," a cooking and nutrition program held at a local recreation center. Though the program began as a children-only cooking class, it evolved to include senior adults when Ms. Weber noticed that a senior lunch program was taking place in the center at the same time. Weber and center staff came up with a plan -- to have the children cook for the seniors, serve them, and then sit down for a shared meal.

Ms. Weber sees this as leading to additional food-related intergenerational activities. For instance, the children and seniors could share recipes, cook and -- of course -- eat together. And naturally, drawing upon her nutrition education knowledge, Ms. Weber would weave in lessons on nutrition and food safety.

Food is a powerful social medium. Through the simple act of cooking together, young and old participants are likely to learn that they have much in common and much to talk about. Research on other intergenerational programs indicates that participants are often pleasantly surprised as they learn of each other's creativity, level of caring, motivation and intelligence.

Several proverbs about food can be drawn upon to encourage people to re-think their views about other age groups. One example is the Portuguese saying, "The old pan is the one that makes good food." Another saying comes from China: "Old ginger tastes spicier." Such sayings remind younger generations that there are many positive characteristics associated with old age. And, through opportunities to "break bread" with young people, older adults learn firsthand that young people have valuable insights to share.

*<http://extension.psu.edu/youth/intergenerational/articles/article-7>*

## News You Can Use

### **KAISER ISSUE BRIEF PROVIDES CLARITY ABOUT MEDICARE'S FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

The Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) recently released an issue brief on Medicare's financial outlook. Medicare's funding, finances, and future continue to be major topics of conversation, including during the confirmation hearings for President Trump's administrative nominees. With this brief, KFF brings much-needed clarity to these discussions. The brief explains Medicare funding, the Affordable Care Act's (ACA's) impact on Medicare's long-term financial stability, and what an aging population means for Medicare going forward.

When policymakers say Medicare is "going broke" or talk about the "Medicare trust fund," they are talking about Part A, the part of Medicare that pays for hospital stays. That trust fund does have limited funding; the current estimate is that the fund will be able to pay 100 percent of Part A costs until 2028. By contrast, in 2009 the estimated insolvency date was 2017. Such wildly fluctuating forecasts coupled with misconceptions about Medicare's funding sources may lead to fears of the program ending; however, "insolvency" of the trust fund would not spell the end for Medicare.

The brief also discusses demographic trends for the country as a whole. As populations age, their health costs become higher, and people who are over age 80 need especially expensive care. The population over 65 years old will increase rapidly, with the population over 80 years old nearly tripling by 2050. This means that Medicare's costs will likely continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, the report also shows that the ACA has had some success in bending the cost curve for Medicare spending. This means that repeal of the ACA may cause a large increase in Medicare's costs. Because of this danger and others, Medicare Rights is deeply concerned about the impact ACA repeal could have on Medicare's future.

<http://kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/10-essential-facts-about-medicare-financial-outlook/>

*Medicare Watch*

## HERE'S HOW TO NOT WASTE YOUR TIME PRESSURING LAWMAKERS

After 32 years in the House of Representatives, here is my advice on how you can best influence members of Congress. Done the right way, communications from citizens can have a significant impact on legislators, even when they claim to be immune to "pressure." ("Pressure," in legislative jargon, is the expression of views with which legislators disagree, as opposed to "public opinion" — the term used for sentiments that reinforce their own.)

### *Tips for Making Your Voice Heard*

The Seniors Action Network has prepared a toolkit, the Seniors Action Network Advocacy Guide,

<http://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/Final%20SAN%20Activitation%20Toolkit%20TAA%20edits.pdf>

to help you in helping lawmakers understand issues that affect America's elders.

There are two things that all of us should be doing all the time right now, and they're by far the most important things.

- Call, and
- Attend Town Hall Meetings

**You should NOT be bothering with online petitions or emailing.**

The key to doing it right is being clear about the goal, which is to persuade the Senator or Representative receiving the communication that how he or she votes on the issue in question will affect how the sender will vote the next time the legislator is on the ballot.

This means the following:

*Make sure you're registered to vote — lawmakers check.*

Many office holders will check this, especially for people who write to them frequently. Elected officials pay as much attention to those who are not registered to vote as butchers do to the food preferences of vegetarians.

*Lawmakers don't care about people outside of their district.*

You can only have an impact on legislators for or against whom you will have a chance to vote the next time they run. In almost all cases, this means only people in whose state or district you live. Senators or representatives whose

names will not be on the ballot you cast are immune to your pressure. There is a small set of exceptions — representatives who want to run for a statewide office in the next election will be sensitive of voters throughout their states.

*Your signature — physical or electronic — on a mass petition will mean little.*

You are trying to persuade the recipient of your communication that you care enough about an issue for it to motivate your voting behavior. Simply agreeing to put your name on a list does not convey this. I have had several experiences of writing back to the signer of a petition to give my view on an issue only to be answered by someone who wondered why I thought he or she cared.

The communication must be individual. It can be an email, physical letter, a phone call or an office visit. It need not be elaborate or eloquent — it is an opinion to be

counted, not an essay. But it will not have an impact unless it shows some individual initiative.

*Know where your representative stands.*

If you have contact with an organization that is working on this issue, try to learn if the recipient of your opinion has taken a position on it. When I received letters from people urging me to vote for a bill of which I was the prominent main sponsor, I was skeptical that the writer would be watching how I voted.

*Communicate — even if you and your representative disagree.*

On the other hand, even where you are represented by people whom you know oppose you on an issue, communicate anyway. Legislators do not simply vote yes or no on every issue. If enough people in a legislator’s voting constituency express strong opposition to a measure to which that legislator is ideologically or politically committed, it might lead him or her to ask the relevant leadership not to bring the bill up. Conflict avoidance is a cherished goal of many elected officials.

*Say “thank you.”*

Even if your Representative and Senators are committed to your causes, you should write or call to thank

them — not frequently, but enough for them to feel reinforced.

Enlist the help of friends in other districts.

Your direct communication with legislators outside your voting area will have no impact. But you do have friends, relatives, associates etc. Find out who the potentially influenceable legislators are on issues of prime importance to you, think about people you may know in their constituencies, and ask those who share your views to communicate with those who represent them. On an extremely important issue, get out the list to who you mail holidays cards or

important invitations and ask them to communicate with their legislators.

To repeat the essence of point 5, if a legislator who you might have expected to vote differently — e.g. a Republican who votes no on a Trump priority — votes as you have urged, send a thank you.

*Barney Frank, 2/7/17*

**SHY PERSON’S GUIDE TO CALLING REPRESENTATIVES**

In the coming weeks and years you will be seeing a lot of requests to call your representatives about issues facing our country. But maybe, like me, you hate calling

How to Contact Your State Committee on Aging Representatives		
County	Name	Email
Belknap		
Carroll	Dr. Norma J Brettell	pastorbrettell@roadrunner.com
Cheshire	Susan Emerson	semerson435@aol.com
Coos	Mark M. E. Frank	maxfra@aol.com
Grafton	John Ackers	John.Acker3@va.gov
Hillsborough	Kathy Baldrige	kathy@lifetimeliquidations.com
	Russ Armstrong	equlzr@gmail.com
	Ken Berlin	KBerlin@savingplaces.org
Merrimack	Herb Johnson	clairhonda@msn.com
Rockingham		
Strafford	Candace Cole-McCrea	snowyowl@metrocast.net
	John Kennedy	jjkrha@yahoo.com
Sullivan	Larry Flint	wrecman@comcast.net
	Mary Catherine Rawls	Mary.catherine.rawls@hitchcock.org
Website:	<a href="http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/beas/aging/">http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/beas/aging/</a>	

people SO MUCH. This is a guide for you.

I'm anxious on the phone. My blood pressure rises when I need to call a customer service line, or even just ask the hours at a restaurant. So calling representatives about political issues is one of my least favorite things to do. I posted on Facebook recently about my experience calling my reps and it got a good response. I think there are a lot of us who want to pitch in but hesitate to pick up the phone. With that in mind, here is my shy person's guide to calling your representative.

**Before you start:**

- Pick an issue.
- Know that it's FAST. It takes maybe 2 minutes to call one person, including the time it take to look up their phone number. Think of it like ripping off a bandaid.
- Know that you don't have to be persuasive. You are really just calling to put yourself on a tally that will be passed along to your representative. You don't have to convince anyone and no one will try to argue with you. Just say your piece (as awkwardly as you want! they won't care!) and get off the phone.
- Know that calling is better than emailing. I would much prefer to email, but your message is more likely to get lost in the deluge. When you talk to a staffer you know for sure that your opinion is being recorded.
- Find your reps' numbers. Go here or here to find out who

they are. Call their local lines when possible. Write down the numbers or save them as contacts so you don't have to look them up every time.

- Take a deep breath.

**During the call:**

- Start with an introduction. I use: Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a constituent of Rep./Sen. \_\_\_\_\_ calling about a concern I have. I see many scripts that omit how to start the call, and it helps me to know for sure how to begin. Be sure to say you are a constituent. They might ask for your zip code, so have that ready.
- Have a script. This is 100% the best way to keep you focused and calm. There are lots of good scripts you can use here or you can write your

own. Say what you are comfortable saying. Remember, you are just calling to be counted.

- Expect their response. The thing I see missing from most instructions for calling reps is what to expect in their response. Most of the time they will just tell you they will pass on your concern. Congrats - if they do this then you are done! They might read a prepared statement in response. They might even say that your rep is not going to take action on the issue you brought up. What they WON'T do is argue with you or say, "what a stupid thing to be concerned about." Don't let your anxious brain convince you they will do this.
- If necessary, reiterate your request. If they read a statement or say the representative will not take action, don't get flustered. Just say, Once again, I'm calling on the Rep./Sen. to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Thank the staffer and hang up.

**After the call:**

- Take another deep breath.
- Congratulate yourself.
- Do some self-care. Maybe start here. Or here. Do whatever makes you feel happy and rewarded.
- Know that it gets easier. The more you call, the more you know what to expect. You may even get to know some staffers. You might never like calling but I promise it gets less awful.

<http://actionfriday.tumblr.com/>

**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.***

## SAYING “YES” COULD COST YOU

Say yes to an extra piece of cake. Say yes to a friend who needs help. Say yes to a chance to travel somewhere new. But if you get a call from an unknown number and a stranger asks if you can hear him, definitely do not say yes.

Police departments and consumer advocates are reporting the spread of an insidious new phone scam that hinges on that one little word. A person posing as a telemarketer or pollster will ask a seemingly innocuous question such as, “Can you hear me OK?” or “Are you over 18?” or “Do you have a home computer?”

The goal is to get a recording of you saying “yes.” Then they will, for example, use your verbal consent to bill you for a cruise you never booked, or authorize bogus charges on your credit card. If you challenge the demand for payment, they can play back your recorded yes, claiming you had agreed to the charge. They hope to confuse or scare you into paying.

The Better Business Bureau first became aware of this ploy last year, when the scammers were largely targeting business numbers, spokeswoman Paula Fleming said. In recent weeks, however, the number of reported calls has been growing sharply, and the con artists have increasingly targeted individual consumers. The scam accounted for around two-thirds of the incidents reported last week to the Better Business Bureau’s Scam Tracker, which collects re-

ports of attempted scams across North America.

So how can you make sure you don’t fall victim to this subtle rip-off?

First, don’t answer the phone if you don’t recognize the number. And check with your phone carrier to see if it offers a robocall-blocking service that can flag suspicious numbers and even prevent many of these calls from making it through. If you do end up on the phone, avoid saying the word “yes.” Try specific, full sentences — “I hear you clearly,” or “I do own a computer.” Better yet, hang up as soon as you sense the caller is fishing for a yes.

If you fear you have fallen for the scam, don’t be embarrassed — professional fraudsters know their business and can trick even the savviest. Instead, take action. Ask your bank and credit card companies to flag your accounts — and then check them daily to make sure no unexpected charges appear.

Also, help authorities crack down on the scammers by reporting any incident to local police and the Federal Trade Commission at [ftccomplaintassistant.gov](http://ftccomplaintassistant.gov).

*Sarah Shemkus, Boston Globe*

## Health & Wellness

### WERE YOU “MOON”ED?

MOON stands for Medicare Outpatient Observation Notice and refers to a requirement that patients in a hospital bed may have an Observation rather than Admis-

sion status under Medicare and must be notified.

There are two reasons why this is important:

1. Medicare doesn't cover Observation Status and
2. Without a 3 day stay under Admission Status Medicare also doesn't cover skilled nursing home care.

Here's a related story from Texas: The son of a 90 year-old Texas man called us about his father, Mr. B. The family thought Mr. B. was an inpatient in the hospital but learned he had been switched to outpatient observation status. (The son had also been told by different hospital personnel that his father had been switched from hospital inpatient to outpatient status and back again twice.) The hospital wouldn't let the son or his mother (who has Mr. B's Power of Attorney) see Mr. B's medical records to confirm his condition or admission status.

The family could not find a skilled nursing facility that would admit Mr. B. because he did not have a 3-day inpatient hospital stay – although he was in the hospital for two weeks. The SNFs wanted a \$5,000 deposit to do so, which the family doesn't have.

The father's two hospital neurologists said they provided medical care, not help with billing. His primary care doctor wouldn't intervene either.

The VA hospital may be willing to take the father in a week or so, but he will have to stay in the acute care hospital until then. The hospi-

## Help Spread the Word!

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

Forward it on!

tal told the family they must pay for his hospital stay while he waits.

### STUDY LINKS GAMES, MENTAL ACUITY

Even in your 70s and beyond, simple activities including Web-surfing, playing bridge, and socializing might stave off mental decline, new research says.

Benefits were greatest in computer users and in those without a gene variation linked with Alzheimer’s disease. But even among seniors with that trait, mental decline that sometimes precedes dementia was less common among those who engaged in mind-stimulating activities.

The results don’t apply to costly, computer-based games that purport to keep the brain sharp — those were not studied. The benefits were found from activities that many seniors have access to.

“They don’t have to spend their life savings on fancy gadgets”, said Dr. Yonas Geda, the study’s senior author and a neurologist at the Mayo Clinic’s campus in

Scottsdale, Ariz. The study was published in JAMA Neurology.

*Associated Press*

### TWO CUPS OF GRAPES A DAY MAY KEEP THE ALZHEIMER’S AWAY

Besides being delicious, grapes have the ability to protect your mental health. In a new study, researchers found that consuming two cups of grapes a day can help fend off Alzheimer’s disease. The effect is likely due to the known antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties of polyphenols, which are believed to reduce oxidative stress in the brain while also promoting blood flow and maintaining the levels of a chemical that boosts memory. Has there ever been a tastier way to protect your brain?

<http://newatlas.com/grapes-alzheimers/47743/>

### A SMALL REVOLUTION BREWING

Dr. Daniel Nadeau is part of a small revolution brewing across California. The food-as-medicine movement has been around for decades, but it’s making inroads as physicians and medical institutions make food a formal part of treatment, rather than relying solely on medications. By prescribing nutritional changes or launching programs such as “Shop with Your Doc,” they’re trying to prevent, limit or even reverse disease by changing what patients eat.

“There’s no question people can take things a long way toward [reversing diabetes](#), reversing hyper-

tension, even [preventing cancer](#) by food choices,” Nadeau says.

In the big picture, says Dr. Richard Afable, CEO and president of St. Joseph Hoag Health, medical institutions across the state are starting to make a philosophical switch to becoming a health organization, not just a health care organization.

That sentiment echoes the tenets of the Therapeutic Food Pantry program at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, which completed its pilot phase and is about to expand on an ongoing basis to five clinic sites throughout the city. The program will offer patients several bags of food prescribed for their condition, along with intensive training in how to cook it.

“We really want to link food and medicine, and not just give away food,” says Dr. Rita Nguyen, the hospital’s medical director of Healthy Food Initiatives. “We want people to understand what they’re eating, how to prepare it, the role food plays in their lives.”

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/01/17/509520895/food-as-medicine-it-s-not-just-a-fringe-idea-anymore>

### BENEFITS OF VITAMIN D

#### 1. Improves Bone Health

Vitamin D plays an important role in the health of your bones. That’s because it increases the absorption of [calcium](#) and phosphorus from your diet—two nutrients important for bone health. Vitamin D helps increase the ab-

sorption of minerals that are important for bone health. Higher levels may also reduce the risk of fractures, limit bone loss and improve recovery from fractures.

## 2. *Reduces Diabetes Risk*

Diabetes is a disorder in which your body cannot process carbs normally. Several types of diabetes exist, but type 1 and type 2 diabetes are the most common.

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease generally diagnosed during childhood or adolescence, whereas type 2 diabetes usually occurs later in life and is related to lifestyle. Interestingly, vitamin D may help reduce the risk of both types of diabetes.

## 3. *Could Improve Heart Health*

Vitamin D may help improve the health of your heart and reduce the likelihood of heart attacks.

That said, although low blood vitamin D levels are often linked to an increased risk of heart disease, however, many studies fail to find a decreased risk from taking vitamin D supplements. Experts speculate that other factors linked to a good vitamin D status may be at play, such as time spent outdoors or a preference for vitamin-D-fortified beverages instead of soft drinks

Thus, although taking vitamin D supplements may be beneficial for other reasons, increasing your levels through life-

style choices still seems to be the best strategy against heart disease.

## 4. *May Lower Your Risk of Certain Cancers*

Maintaining adequate vitamin D levels may have some benefits for preventing cancer, but it remains unclear whether taking vitamin D supplements provides any anti-cancer benefits. It may be wise to focus on maintaining adequate vitamin D levels through lifestyle choices that are known to reduce the risk of cancer. For instance, through a healthy diet and regular physical activity—preferably outdoors.

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

## **PACEMAKERS MAY MALFUNCTION NEAR CERTAIN APPLIANCES**

Pacemakers may fail to properly regulate patients' heartbeats near certain appliances and tools that generate electric and magnetic fields, a German study suggests.

Researchers tested how electric and magnetic fields impact pacemakers, small battery-operated devices that help patients' hearts beat in a regular rhythm, for 119 people under different conditions.

The results suggest that electric and magnetic fields from sources like power lines, household appliances, electrical tools and entertainment systems might interfere with the devices, said lead author Dr. Andreas Napp of the University Hospital Aachen in Germany.

“Usually pacemakers programmed to the vendor's recommended set-

tings are safe regarding electromagnetic interference in daily practice,” Napp said by email. “However, lots of electrical appliances from daily life emit strong electromagnetic fields in very close proximity of the appliance. Pacemakers with electromagnetic interference usually show inhibition of stimulating the heart or change the pacing mode or induce a faster heart beat for the time of interference.”

It's possible that staying more than 12 inches away from an electromagnetic source like an appliance or tool might limit the potential for pacemaker interference, the authors note. Still, the researchers conclude that people exposed to stronger electromagnetic fields on the job, such as workers in certain types of manufacturing, might need to consider the potential for pacemaker malfunction.

“Patients should inform the doctors before device implantation if they are exposed to strong electromagnetic fields in daily practice or in the work environment,” Napp said. “During follow up visits in the pacemaker outpatient clinic, care must be taken while reprogramming the sensitivity of the device.”

Welding in particular can expose patients to electromagnetic fields that interfere with pacemakers, said Dr. Gordon Tomaselli, chief

**Looking for a ENH newsletter back issue?**

**Check our website:**

**[www.engagingnh.org](http://www.engagingnh.org)**

of cardiology at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore.

“It's not surprising that pacemakers could be coaxed to experience electromagnetic malfunction,” Tomaselli, who wasn't involved in the study.

Most tools and appliances people use at home probably aren't a problem, Tomaselli added.

“Welders are a problem, but with most other tools people would use I don't prohibit that,” Tomaselli said. “But certainly if people are feeling odd or fatigued or having symptoms like they had before they got the pacemaker I tell them to see me or see their doctor.”

To read more,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-pacemakers-appliances-idUSKBN1662EX>

## Tech Tips

### MEDICAL ALERT DEVICES LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN

“Stylish” isn't the word that pops to mind when most people think about medical alert devices. But most people aren't 94-year-old fashion icon Iris Apfel, who has been tapped by a company called WiseWear to bring her bold aesthetic to the wearables market.

Wearable technology, designed to monitor health and send emergency alerts, has been around for decades, but even as the technology has become more advanced, these practical products are not typically the type of thing to show off at a gala event.

WiseWear is attempting to change that by making wearables that double as luxury jewelry, and hiring Apfel to design the next collection in its Socialite line of call-for-help bracelets.

“Imagine a woman is at an event and leaves late at night, walks into a dark parking lot, and someone unusual comes up,” Gerald Wilmlink, founder and CEO of WiseWear, recently told Fast Company. “She can tap the bracelet three times, and it sends a distress message to loved ones with her location. They know exactly where she is.”

In addition to allowing the user to send discrete emergency messages to her chosen emergency contacts, these bracelets also can be used to track fitness measurements such as steps and calories.

However, with fashion comes a price. While standard medical alert systems such as Alert1 can be purchased for as low as \$30, these WiseWear bracelets will range from \$295 to \$345.

*Nextavenue.com, 4/8/16*

*Editor's Note: If you just want a medical alert that is more attractive, check out:*

<https://www.laurenshope.com/?gclid=CLi70bPMs9ICFUmHswodeKgLlw>

### THE BROWSER SETTING EVERYONE SHOULD TURN OFF RIGHT NOW

We all owe a big high-five to whoever first figured out auto-complete. It's probably spared us from a collective lifetime spent repeatedly filling out tedious info

every time we log into or sign up for a new account. Unfortunately, some lowlife hackers may be hijacking the feature in a number of the most popular web browsers, in order to surreptitiously steal your personal info, including your credit card number, without your ever knowing about it.

Basically, scammers are putting hidden text boxes onto websites that are "auto-completed" on the sly with things like your address and credit card number, when all you thought you were doing was submitting your name or email address. Fortunately, it's pretty easy to protect against.

The potential for such a phishing scam was first discovered by a Finnish developer, who realized that it's fairly simple to poach info from people by planting rogue text boxes on a particular target page. That's because many browsers' autofill systems work by automatically plugging in pertinent stored info -- your mailing address, phone numbers, credit cards, etc. -- into blank text boxes in an online form. By attempting the scheme himself, he found that would-be scammers could simply add additional "hidden" boxes to the page, and trick people into giving away more info than they intended to.

Affected browsers include biggies like Chrome, Safari, and Opera, as well as extensions like the password manager/form filler LastPass, which is perhaps an even more obvious target. So, if you're currently using any of these, it'd be wise to head to your Preference menu and temporarily

disable the autofill feature until a security patch is pushed out.

Joe McGauley, 1/19/2017

## Dollars & Sense

### FIVE SENIOR DISCOUNTS

One of the great things about getting older is the plethora of senior discounts out there. We've all seen some great senior discounts for travel, hotels, and restaurants.

In a Starbucks era of overly priced \$5.00 coffee it's great to see restaurants offer extra incentives to their loyal customer base to keep them coming back for more. I remember when my mom was literally counting down the days to her 55th birthday so that she could start enjoying \$0.67 coffee from her local McDonald's. She was so proud of her gray hair!

Little perks and big perks alike are definitely a welcome friend. The below top five senior discounts are sure to delight:

1. Airline tickets offer an additional discount for seniors.

Who doesn't want to go visit their adorable grandkids five states away?! A wonderful segment by CBS brought up some great ideas on how seniors can save big bucks by using a little research. One topic they brought up showed how to score senior airline discounts. Many of us now go online to book airfare tickets, but with adding one crucial step (as mentioned in [this video clip](#)), you can save an extra 5% on top of the online price which definitely adds up!

And what small step is that? It's simply calling the airline up once you see the best price online and asking them to book that quote with an additional senior discount. Sounds easy enough and it could save some serious cash.

1. Online senior discount sites.

For computer savvy seniors, [seniordiscounts.com](#) is just about the best website for finding senior discounts in your area. With over 250,000 local listings and a very easy to use interface, it's not hard to start your way into big savings. It also has a free newsletter to keep you up to date on the newest senior discounts.

2. Senior Pass at National Parks: \$10.00

What better time to get back out into nature than during one's golden years. For only \$10, seniors that are 62 and older may purchase a National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Senior Pass. The Senior Pass covers everyone in the vehicle upon entry and many locations also offer additional discounts on camping fees. This senior pass is definitely worth every red cent and good for lifetime access. The rest of us, unfortunately, have to pay \$80 per year to get this same type of access. We are counting down to our golden years: Yosemite, we are coming!

3. Car Insurance discounts. Just for being a senior.

Seriously.

4. You can even get a senior discount on your car insurance- many companies offer up to a 10% mature driver discount. Just ask your current car insurance agent about the details and how to get qualified. It is definitely worth your time and the savings add up.
5. Shopping on certain days of the week.
6. Many retailers offer senior discounts on certain days of the week. Ross Dress for Less offers an additional discount for seniors on Tuesdays, while Salvation Army and other non-profits offer additional discounts on Wednesdays. Check with your local retailer as they may offer a discount if you ask for it even if it's not the designated discount day.

As a bonus, here's another



one. Well, this isn't really a secret, but if you haven't joined yet, AARP is a great place to start for finding big senior discounts! The minimum age requirement is only 50 years old and you can enjoy savings of around 20-30% on hotel stays and exclusive travel perks. This is the #1 place to start your way into senior savings.

The list of companies and services that provide senior discounts continues to grow every year. Companies value your opinion and hope that you'll remain a loyal customer by providing discounts and rewards programs. Here's to you enjoying those savings!

<https://www.senioradvisor.com/blog/2014/08/top-five-senior-discounts-you-didnt-know-about/>

## Laugh & Live Longer

### HOW TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LEVEL OF INSANITY IN RETIREMENT

- At lunch time, sit in your parked car with sunglasses and point a hair dryer at passing cars, and watch them slow down
- On all your check stubs, write, "For Marijuana"!
- Skip down the street rather than walk, and see how many looks you get.

- With a serious face, order a Diet Water whenever you go out to eat.
- Sing along at The Opera.
- When the money comes out of the ATM, scream "I Won! I Won!"
- When leaving the Zoo, start running towards the car park, yelling, "Run For Your Lives! They're Loose!"

*And The Final Way To Keep A Healthy Level Of Insanity: My Favorite...*

- Go to a large Department store's fitting room, enter and yell out, "There's no paper in here!"

### GARDEN SNAKES CAN BE DANGEROUS

Snakes also known as Garter Snakes (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) can be dangerous. Yes, grass snakes, not rattlesnakes. Here's why.

A couple in Sweetwater, Texas, had a lot of potted plants. During a recent cold spell, the wife was bringing a lot of them indoors to protect them from a possible freeze.

It turned out that a little green garden grass snake was hidden in one of the plants. When it had warmed up, it slithered out and the wife saw it go under the sofa.

She let out a very loud scream.

The husband (who was taking a shower) ran out into the living room naked to see what was the

problem. She told him there was a snake under the sofa.

He got down on the floor on his hands and knees to look for it. About that time the family dog came and cold-nosed him on the behind. He thought the snake had bitten him, so he screamed and fell over on the floor.

His wife thought he had had a heart attack, so she covered him up, told him to lie still, and called an ambulance.

The attendants rushed in, would not listen to his protests, loaded him on the stretcher, and started carrying him to the ambulance.

About that time, the snake crawled from under the sofa and one of the Emergency Medical Technicians saw it and dropped his end of the stretcher. That's when the man broke his leg and why he is still in the hospital.

The wife still had the problem of the loose snake in the house, so she called a neighbor who volunteered to capture the snake. He armed himself with a rolled-up newspaper and began poking under the couch. Soon he decided it was gone and told the woman, who sat down on the sofa to relax.

But while relaxing, her hand dangled between the cushions, where she felt the snake wriggling around. When she screamed and fainted, the snake rushed back under the sofa.

The neighbor man, seeing her lying there passed out, tried to use CPR to revive her.

Contact Information For NH Members of the U.S. Congress			
Name	Mailing Address	Phone	E-Mail Contact Form
U.S. Representative Carol Shea Porter	1530 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515	202-225-5456	<a href="https://shea-porter.house.gov/contact/email">https://shea-porter.house.gov/contact/email</a>
U.S. Representative Ann Kuster	137 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515	202-225-5206	<a href="https://kuster.house.gov/contact/email-me">https://kuster.house.gov/contact/email-me</a>
U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan	B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224-3324	<a href="https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator">https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator</a>
U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen	506 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202- 224-2841	<a href="http://www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne">www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne</a>

The neighbor's wife, who had just returned from shopping at the grocery store, saw her husband's mouth on the woman's mouth. She slammed her husband in the back of the head with a bag of canned goods, knocking him out and cutting his scalp to a point where it needed stitches.

The noise woke the woman from her dead faint and she saw her neighbor lying on the floor with his wife bending over him, and assumed that the snake had bitten him also. She went to the kitchen and got a small bottle of whiskey, and began pouring it down the man's throat.

By now, the police had arrived.

Breathe here.....

They saw the unconscious man, smelled the whiskey, and assumed that a drunken fight had occurred. They were about to arrest them all, when the women tried to explain how it all happened over a little garden snake!

The police called another ambulance (this one for the injured neighbor), which took away the neighbor and his sobbing wife.

Now, the little snake again crawled out from under the sofa and one of the policemen drew his gun and fired at it. He missed the snake and hit the leg of the end table. The table fell over, the lamp on it shattered and, as the bulb broke, it started a fire in the drapes.

The other policeman tried to beat out the flames, and fell through the window into the yard on top of the family dog who was startled, jumped, and raced into the street, where an oncoming car swerved to avoid it and smashed into the parked police car.

Meanwhile, other neighbors saw the burning drapes and called in the fire department. The firemen had started raising their ladder which tore out the overhead wires, knocked out the power, and disconnected the telephones in a ten-square city block area (but they did extinguish the house fire).

Time passed! Both men were discharged from the hospital, the house was repaired, the dog came home, the police acquired a new car, and all was right with their world.

A while later, they were watching TV and the weatherman announced a cold snap for that night. The wife asked her husband if he thought they should bring in their plants for the night.

And that's when he shot her.

## Purposeful Living

Part of the mission for the Newport Senior Center is to promote independence and wellness for seniors in Sullivan County. The volunteer who stands out the most for his dedication to providing this valuable lifeline is Robert "Bob" Burby.

Bob was a Design Engineer before he retired. Today, he continues to create a homelike atmosphere at the center for all seniors to enjoy. Bob is at the center daily to welcome individuals with his friendly spirit and his medicine bag of humor.

For the past two years he has served on Board of Directors a role he takes seriously, but he truly believes laughter is the best medicine and he definitely brings plenty of laughter to our center,



**Robert "Bob" Burby**

every day. Each holiday, guests of the center wait anxiously to see how Bob is going to celebrate the holiday. Will he be the St. Patrick's Day Leprechaun, or Santa Clause or is he the next busty woman participating in the center's "Saints & Sinners" musical revue? Whatever his character may be, you know it is going to put a smile on your face and make you want to come back again and again.

Bob continues to spread his humorous spirit when he is found serving congregate meals every day or slicing meat for Meals-on-Wheels. The bowling alley roars as Bob encourages his friends to keep moving with a little bit of bowling fun every Tuesday. His laughter is infectious when he helps with bingo every Wednesday.

Senior Centers run on a shoestring budget, which means continuous fundraising. When a helping hand is needed for these efforts, you know Bob will be there to help. Bob stands out in the crowd at the

weekly, summer "Concerts on the Common" popcorn sales. During the annual yard sale Bob mingles throughout the crowd as he wheels and deals explaining to the buyer the importance of his/her contribution. Each year, the center participates in the annual Newport Winter Carnival with a Dinner and each year, Bob is found serving dinner dressed in attire fitting for the theme. ---Bob also serves on the Activities Committee to bring his creativity of fun activities, like a Senior Prom, that will keep seniors moving and engaged in his/her community.

Bob also has a serious side. He goes to great lengths to make every person at the center feel special. He even creates his own birthday cards for those he knows are celebrating a birthday. Bob's cards are unique because he takes the time to learn the individual's strengths that others may not recognize and describes those strengths within the person's name when wishing him/her a happy birthday. (and so we're going to have some fun here spelling out BOB...

Because of his gigantic heart, helping hands and desire to help people live a healthy lifestyle full of fun; Our center has been successful in obtaining sustainability that will ensure every aging individual will have a place to call home for years to come, a place to participate in wellness programs and a place to have fun and for those reasons, we Believe Bob exemplifies the meaning of volunteerism and dedication to his peers.

## Board Notes

### PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

A year ago, in the March 2016 EngAGING NH News, we introduced a section called Focus on Community without announcement or explanation of the intent. Perhaps none was needed. But it's time to highlight a collection of isolated, interesting articles to the big picture.

Everywhere you turn, you will find articles on age friendly communities, aging in place, nursing homes without walls—all in recognition that people prefer to live in their own homes and communities. There are also many articles that identify some of the shortcomings of trying to support that wish. Our Guest Article, on ways to beat loneliness, is an example. And prior, we've shared stories, where Meals on Wheels drivers may be the only person an elder sees.

Here's the interesting thing: whether you talk about placement in a nursing home or aging in place, without a robust support system, the fear is the same—Isolation.

There is a need (and there probably always will be a need) for nursing homes or institutional care. And there's no question that the regulations for insuring quality care in these facilities MUST be a priority. That is why so much thought and planning went into The Nursing Facility Reform Act of 1987 which resulted in regula-

tions designed to focus on individual preferences and needs.

Today we find ourselves in a completely different environment, but one that still need a focus on quality. In the facility model, we had top to bottom or vertical decision making involving well-intended providers and medical professionals. But now we need to think differently.

We need horizontal planning that focuses on those affected as the *primary voice*. We need to talk to one another. We need to discover what is and what isn't important. We need to look at simple but meaningful ways to connect.

This issue's Breaking Bread article is a wonderful example, as is the article on co-housing with college students a Netherlands. (August 2016)

The bottom line is that we don't have to make it complicated. In fact one of the greatest stimulants to creativity is group interaction as the Southern NH Regional Planning Commission discovered when it developed the Complete Street Tool Kit (See NH Updates).

In the words of Marianne Williamson:

*“In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it.”*

One more thing—Research shows that 1% of the square root of any size group can influence the entire group.

Ponder the potential.

**EngAGING NH**  
9 Gleneagle Drive  
Bedford, NH 03110

ADDRESS CORRECTION  
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