



SARATOGA VITAL AGING NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2011

The mission of SVAN is to promote self-determination, civic engagement, and personal growth for people as they age.

SVAN welcomes you to the third edition of the Saratoga Vital Aging Network Newsletter. Here you will find information on events and happenings for seniors in the Saratoga County area, as well as a wealth of information that will assist you in this forever-changing stage of life.

If you are not a member, please think about joining SVAN. You can be a part of SVAN by filling out the form at the end of this newsletter. Your support will help us move forward with ongoing initiatives for seniors.

SVAN IS FOR YOU!

WHO: YOU who are AGING into the third phase of life.

WHERE: Here in SARATOGA!

WHAT: Connecting with each other and all generations within the community. NETWORKING!

HOW: By being healthy, active, and involved through service and work, VITAL!

WHEN: Now, every day!

WHY: Vital aging benefits everyone in the community!

Looking Forward to a Great Year in 2011

Now that the holidays are definitely over and the New Year's resolutions have been made and probably broken, SVAN is gearing up for an exciting year of diverse monthly events, neighborhood coffees and dedicated committee work.

For those of you who did not attend our October conference, the enthusiastic audience and the positive evaluations we received energized SVAN's board. We received definitive feedback from the seniors who attended the conference regarding some of the issues and concerns they have. SVAN has gathered all the information from the roundtable discussions and condensed the recurring themes:

- ❖ Interest in a clearinghouse for information that supports the coordination of and access to various services that are available to seniors.
- ❖ A comprehensive county plan on housing for people as they age that takes into consideration affordability, accessibility, and particular conditions. such as tax credits, diverse populations and other concerns.
- ❖ Education and information to keep seniors current about public policy that affects their options.

The SVAN Board is very interested in hearing from our senior friends and getting your input about our next steps.

Looking Forward to A Great Year (Cont'd.)

The SVAN Board Committees are working diligently on programs and ideas that will help seniors live their years vitally – with good humor, interesting pastimes, and the best health possible. Think about joining one of our committees listed below:

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT - Interested in public policy, advocacy and any regional or national issues that impact the aging.

PROGRAMMING – Presents programs on diverse senior issues, fun events that keep us smiling and community events that bring us closer together.

PROMOTION - Helps get the word out about the importance of senior issues via our Website, e-mail, newspaper articles and SVAN Newsletter.

If any of the above committees interest you, let us know. We would be thrilled to have you join a SVAN committee.

This is a great time to be involved with senior issues. According to a recent article by columnist Ellen Goodman, 2011 ushered in the year of the senior baby boomers. The boomers will be turning 65 at the rate of 10,000 a day FOR THE NEXT 19 YEARS! How exciting! There is strength in numbers. Think about the impact seniors can be making in our communities. Join us!

SVAN Board of Directors

FYI FOR SENIORS

We know winter seems like it will never end, but it's OK to think spring cleaning and preparing for the coming warm summer months. This could also be a wonderful time to consider preparing for other seasons of our lives. Many individuals never give any thought to how they will access aging services until a crisis occurs. The goal of several local agencies and organizations is to provide seniors and their caregivers with the necessary information for them to safely age in place. By simply connecting with them first, you will significantly simplify navigating the maze of various services and systems that exist. **Below is a list of contacts and upcoming events that will facilitate your search for services:**

2-1-1 (www.211ny.org)

Free and confidential call line available to help connect you to services 24 hours a day

Saratoga County NY Connects

Information and referral source providing you with choices for long-term care

Saratoga County Office for the Aging, 152 West High Street, Ballston Spa, NY 12020 – 714-4826

Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency

Assists veterans and their families in obtaining services and benefits to which they are entitled from Federal, State or local government

152 West High Street, Ballston Spa, NY 12020 - 884-4115

Interagency Awareness Day

March 16, 2011 - 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Dance Center, Skidmore College, 815 North Broadway

No registration is necessary

For additional information, please call Dottie Sellers at 587-3158

Tools for Caregivers Conference (www.capitalregioncaregiver.com)

Saturday, April 9, 2011 – Advance Registration is required – Call 382-8481, Ext. 1238

Bulmer Communications Center, Hudson Valley Community College

Skidmore Students Interview Elders

The social environment was gracious, the subjects were excited and the students were at ease. That is the abbreviated description of an event that brought Skidmore students and elders in the community together at the end of the fall semester.

Professor Crystal Moore believes her students need to get their “hands dirty” while they are learning. Her course, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, is taught just that way. Students in this course are expected to go out into the particular social environment being discussed in class to have a real experience whether it is a homeless shelter or place of worship; an AA program or pre-school program.

All 30 members of the class left campus for the home of Laura Chodos, SVAN board member, to interview elders from the community when the class came to the section on aging. Each student interviewed an elder they chose while socializing over tea and cookies.

What could this group of people in their 60s, 70s, and 80s have to tell these young adults who haven't yet reached the age of 21 years old? Will there be enough information gathered to write a final paper for the course? Will I be able to connect with a young college student steeped in the theory of the course?

These concerns were quickly put to rest once the interviews began. The students found that elders have a lot of life to share about the past, the present and yes, even the future. One question asked was, “If in retrospect the elder would have done something different with their life at age 21.” Most elders answered this question, not with regret but in the manner of a “Monday morning quarterback.” In other words, woulda, coulda, shoulda, but I didn't and here I am alive and well with a great deal of life to be grateful for.



Skidmore student John Mendenhall and Margie Ingram enjoying the intergenerational experience.

Sharing aspirations was important to understanding and appreciating each other. Professor Moore was pleased that the students had very astute insights as a result of the interviews that will serve them well in the pursuit of social work. Relationships are central to one's well-being regardless of one's place in the life cycle. Students found their interviewees had transcended many of the challenges associated with aging to live joyful, full lives.

In an e-mail sent to Professor Moore, one student summarized it “I want to tell you what an incredible experience it was. The man that I spoke to just had so much wisdom, and probably the most positive outlook on life that I've ever seen. I feel like we really connected, and as nervous as I was to sit down and have a one-on-one interview with a complete stranger, I'm SO glad I did.” This is a great example of the power of intergenerational relationships.



Don't Gripe – Get a Grip

For those of us who make the choice and those who have no choice, winter in the northeast does have its pearls and its perils. You can choose to conquer or to be conquered. You can choose to be safe. Safety doesn't just happen – you have to make it happen.

Let's start with assuring your mobility for the entire winter by taking precautions for those times when you are out and about. Invest in a pair of grips for your boots or walking shoes. Grips provide increased traction, increased confidence to be out walking and an additional measure of safety.

Please be aware that though grips work very well outside they may not provide the same level of safety inside on marble or ceramic floors or shiny surfaces often found in malls and stores.

If you use a cane you may want to consider adding a metal grip to the bottom of the cane to prevent slipping on ice or snow.

After being out in the wet snow remove shoes immediately. Melting snow on a warm floor will leave puddles of water that could be slippery and cause a person to fall. Keep a bench or chair close to the entry so you can sit to remove your shoes or boots.

Many elderly are still very capable of driving and do so even in wintery conditions. Just a few reminders and maybe some information you do not know. Allow extra time to reach your destination. Rushing increases tension and risk that can result in poor judgment. If you find yourself in a tough spot use low gear. The steady pull and moderate power of low gear is the best set of conditions for getting you out of a snow bank or off a patch of ice. "They" say that traction is greatest just before wheels start to spin.

The best way to prevent becoming stuck in a winter snow hazard is to avoid travel altogether. However, if you must travel, let someone know of your travel plans. Take every caution possible, be prepared, be safe.

Palliative Care – What Is It?

At a recent program on end-of-life issues sponsored by the Single Payer Association, Saratoga Vital Aging Network and the Saratoga Springs Public Library, palliative care was one of the topics discussed. Palliative care is a relatively new approach for providing relief for pain, symptoms and stress that accompany a serious illness. Having said this, it is important to note that this approach to care is not new just newly or more recently defined as such and organized into a deliberate option for care. This being the case a further exploration of palliative care may be helpful.

Traditional palliative care can be offered any time in the course of an illness and ideally should begin at the time of diagnosis. The terms "palliative care" and "hospice care" should not be used interchangeably. Hospice is only one type of palliative care that can be provided in the last six months of life.

The word palliative comes from the Latin *palliare* "to cloak" which is an appropriate way to look at palliative care. It is any form of care or treatment that concentrates on reducing the severity of symptoms, rather than striving to halt, delay, or reverse the progression of the illness itself or provide a cure for the illness. The key objective of palliative care is to prevent and relieve suffering and to improve quality of life for people facing serious illness.

There is a distinction made between general palliative care and hospice care, which delivers palliative. In the United States, the two aspects of care share a similar philosophy, but differ in their payment systems and location of services.

The first United States hospital-based palliative care programs began in the late 1980s at hospitals such as the Cleveland Clinic and Medical College of Wisconsin. Since then there has been an increase in hospital-based palliative care programs, now numbering more than 1400. Now 80% of hospitals with more than 300 beds have a program.

Palliative care is provided by a team of experts, including palliative care doctors, nurses and social workers. Other professionals who may be called upon as part of the team are chaplains, massage therapists, pharmacists, nutritionists and others. The team works with the patient's own doctor. According to the literature on palliative care an effective team keeps in close communication to provide the best available management of pain, while helping the patient navigate the healthcare system and guiding the patient through difficult and complex treatment choices. The team may also be expected to lend emotional and spiritual support.

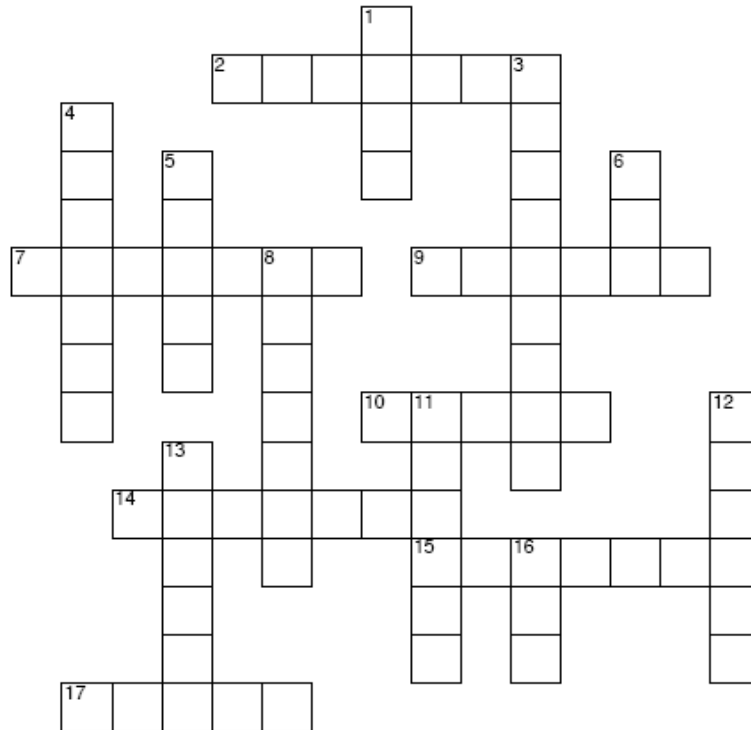
If you are interested in learning more about specific palliative care programs in this region contact the following:

Community Hospice of Saratoga
179 Lawrence Street, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 (518) 581-0800
Faith Parker fparker@communityhospice.org

Stratton VA Medical Center
113 Holland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208 (518) 626-6090
Nancy Nelson nancy.nelson3@va.gov

Community Hospice of Albany
445 New Karner Road, Albany, NY 12205 (518) 724-0200
Karen Berney kberney@communityhospice.org
www.communityhospice.org

Silver Screen Puzzle



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

- 2 The Gladiator
- 7 June Allyson dons braces and bobby sox in "Too Young to be Kissed" to get an audition as this type of musician
- 9 Long after her death, her estate was instrumental in getting the Dead Celebrities Bill passed.
- 10 Location of the green valley in "How Green Was My Valley."
- 14 Word uttered by huge, mustached rubbery lips that filled the screen.
- 15 The deceased first wife who lived in Manderely.
- 17 A lonely, unmarried, lovelorn middle-aged, 34 year old son who works as a Bronx butcher

DOWN

- 1 Metro Golden Mayer icon.
- 3 His list was filmed in black and white.
- 4 Place where Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid went to hide.
- 5 What Jerry Maguire suggested you follow.
- 6 The number of times Natalie Wood and Robert Wagner were married.
- 8 "Dear" in, "Frankly my dear, "I don't give a damn."
- 11 Which Hepburn said, "Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, it's at the end of your arm."
- 12 Name of the estate where Citizen Kane dies.
- 13 A 1937 movie in which Cary Grant and Constance Bennett become ghosts.
- 16 The "mockingbird" in "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Spotlight on:

SVAN Board Members

CINDY HARRINGTON - A native of the Albany region, Cindy received her BA from the University of Albany and an RN from the Samaritan School of Nursing. Cindy is a devoted baseball mom to her two children 10 and 12, is an avid reader, and loves craft fairs and seeing new places - although at the moment her very busy life precludes much traveling.

Cindy is the Director of Marketing & Development for Shelters of Saratoga, and is the chair of the Aging and Disability Network, a countywide organization that meets monthly to educate providers about the many senior services available in Saratoga County. Always thinking of others, one of Cindy's most rewarding community service was as a volunteer firefighter for several years. (She's still fighting the good fight!)

SUE JORGENSEN - Sue grew up in Winchester, MA, and attended Skidmore College majoring in psychology. She received her MA from Harvard University and taught elementary grades and preschool for 35 years plus a few years with Simmons College working as a supervisor of student teachers.

After retiring from teaching, Sue drove a handicap bus for a few years and then decided to make a change. She rented out her house, got into her car with only her essentials and traveled for a year. Although Sue still loves to travel, she decided she wanted to be near her daughter and her family and now resides in Saratoga. She loves tennis, Skidmore, A.L.L., and all things Saratoga. (We're lucky she finally settled here!)

PHIL DIAMOND - Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Phil attended Cornell University and received a degree in Industrial and Labor Relations. He spent four years in the Navy, stationed at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Phil then joined the State Department and lived in Washington, DC for 37 years. His specialty was Information Technology and he traveled to all the major embassies in Europe installing security networks.

After Phil retired from the State Department, he and his wife came back to the Albany area where his wife was originally from. They settled in Saratoga Springs and Phil became involved in politics and several local organizations. He loves to read, enjoys movies and working out at the YMCA. One of his passions is ice hockey; he played at Cornell and is a huge Ranger fan. Phil still loves to travel, especially to visit his son and grandchildren in Maryland!

EDWIN HAMMOND, JR. - Ed grew up in Wassaic, a small hamlet in Amenia, NY. After high school Ed attended Marist College in Poughkeepsie and then moved further upstate to teach at St. Patrick's Junior/Senior High School in the Catskills. After receiving his Masters at Sienna and the College of St. Rose in Albany, he continued at St. Patrick's as teacher, basketball coach, guidance counselor and then principal.

In 1987 Saratoga Catholic contacted Ed to ask him to guide the school's high school program and Ed remained in Saratoga as the principal at Saratoga Catholic for 17 years until his retirement in 2005. In addition to the SVAN board, Ed serves on the SOS board, the board of the Catholic School Administrators of NYS, and is also on the Pastoral Council of St. Joseph's Parish in Greenfield. In addition, Ed still attends plays, football and basketball games and other activities interacting with the kids at Saratoga Catholic High. (Ed is still the teacher!)

GET A GOOD NIGHTS'S SLEEP

A recent article in a Sunday newspaper included an interview by Gayle Jo Carter with actress Jane Fonda. It was titled "Jane Fonda, 73 and Sensational! At first glance one would think, "sure with all her money, people at her beck and call, and probably no health problems, how can she not look sensational"? However, upon closer observation, the article was actually quite informative focusing on diet, exercise and sleep.

Diet: A sensible, healthy eating plan is important for all. Ms. Fonda talked about her diet of steamed fish and chicken, fresh fruit and vegetables, some dairy and no desserts! One would not need a lot of cash to stick to this diet!

Exercise: Jane Fonda walks, hikes, swims and rides an exercise bike. She works out with weights 3 to 4 times a week and also does yoga. She believes really nothing is better for depression than exercise. There isn't a bunch of people at her side as she sticks to her exercise regimen. Fonda is in it for her health!

Sleep: Fonda explains that getting 8 to 9 hours of sleep a night is a huge component of her keeping healthy plan. Perhaps she knows what she's talking about. SVAN recently checked out a Health Report from Harvard that stresses the benefits of a good night's sleep. According to Harvard, the following are important reasons to sleep well.

1. Learning and Memory: Sleep helps the brain commit new information to memory through a process called memory consolidations.
2. Metabolism and Weight: Sleep deprivation may cause weight gain by affecting the way our bodies process and store carbohydrates.
3. Safety: Sleeplessness contributes to a greater tendency to fall asleep during the daytime and this could contribute to falls, medical errors and accidents.
4. Mood: Sleep loss may result in irritability, impatience and inability to concentrate.
5. Cardiovascular Health: Sleep disorders have been linked to hypertension, Increased stress hormone levels and irregular heartbeat.
6. Disease: Sleep deprivation can alter your immune system.

Like so many seniors, Fonda also does have her share of health problems. She has osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, has had her left knee and right hip replaced and depends upon numerous prescriptions, but she's upbeat and making the most of her life.

Of course, we can't promise you a 121 pound perfect body if you follow Fonda's advise, but eat well, exercise as much as you can and have pleasant dreams. Hey, you never know!

Health is not just an absence of illness -- it is a way of living.

Bill Moyers

Keeping your body healthy is an expression of gratitude to the whole cosmos – the trees, the clouds, everything.

Thich Nhat Hanh

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Check the SVAN Web site for the latest information about SVAN activities and events of interest. www.saratogavitalaging.org

SVAN's plan of action for YOU:

- **To promote self-determination through:**
 - Health and wellness programs
 - Knowledge of community resources
 - Development of personal strengths
- **To promote civic engagement through:**
 - Being informed about issues impacting aging
 - Participating in public policy decisions
 - Advocacy for Vital Aging

To promote personal growth through:

- Opportunities for continued education
- Options for meaningful work
- Service as a volunteer
- Connections to the community
- Cultural exploration



Want to find out more about Saratoga Vital Aging Network?
Become a member and receive e-mail notification of events, member benefits and information

**Saratoga Vital Aging Network
110 Spring Street
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
dsarno@saratogavitalaging.org**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- Yes, I want to be a member of SVAN. I wish to make a donation to SVAN
Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Saratoga Institute - SVAN

If you are already a member, please pass this form on to a friend.