



# Maine Aging News & Information Update

Maine Gerontological Society

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## State Immersed in Medicare Part D

Advocates for Maine's elders continue to be actively involved in assisting elders receiving Medicare in enrolling in Part D of the Medicare Program. Trained volunteers throughout the state sit with those applying for Medicare Part D, helping them navigate the medicare.gov website as applicants attempt to enroll in plans that best meet their medical and financial needs.

Tammy Delong, Medicare Prescription Drug Specialist of the Aroostook Agency on Aging devised an informational page that assists advocates and elders alike in understanding how to read the plan search.

Below are some common terms that arise in a Medicare plan search:

**Plan Information:** Includes the name and contact information of the company that offers this plan. Applicants can call them and enroll directly with them by phone or use the website to enroll.

**Total Annual Drug Plan Cost:** This amount is the TOTAL amount that you will pay next year for medications. It includes the co-payment, cost shares, and premium amount.

**Monthly Drug Premium:** The amount that you will pay per month for the plan next year. This amount may be

deducted from your Social Security Check, bank account or you may pay the company directly.

**Deductible:** indicates the amount of the deductible for the plan selected.

**Monthly Drug Costs Before Initial Coverage Limit:** Indicates the monthly drug costs until drug costs total \$2,250.

**Monthly Drug Costs:** Costs after Initial Coverage Limit, but before \$3,600. This is known as the "Donut Hole."

**Monthly Cost for Medications:** This donut hole lasts until one pays \$2,850 in medications.

**Monthly Drug Cost After \$3,600:** Considered to the catastrophic level of coverage, consumers pay 5% of the total drug costs for the rest of the

## June 2006 Aging Conference Combines Policy & Practice Issues

On June 1-2, 2006, the annual conference of the Maine Gerontological Society (MGS) will be held in conjunction with the annual conference of the Bar Harbor Rural Geriatric Planning Committee. The conference will be at the

Holiday Inn SunSpree Resort in Bar Harbor, Maine, just outside the entrance to Acadia National Park. The partnering of MGS and the Rural Geriatric Planning Committee is a win-win collaboration creating exciting opportunities to address concurrently the clinical and the policy implications of an aging Maine population. The conference will address the ways in which geriatric practice helps shape aging policy and how aging policy, in turn, affects practice. Joint planning will facilitate the dialog between policy advocates and practitioners, will make statewide planning of aging-related educational events more efficient, will boost statewide attendance at annual events, and will demonstrate the importance of partnering and collaboration throughout Maine's aging network.

The planning committee for the June conference includes MGS board members and general membership.

A wide range of expert keynote addresses and panel presentations are being organized. There will

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also be numerous workshops addressing such topics as dementia and hospice care, pain management, urinary incontinence, prescription drug use and abuse, geriatric practice competencies, and Alzheimer's disease as it relates to environmental design.

Submitted by Len Kaye, Education Chair

**Factoid!** Did you know that every 7 seconds a Baby Boomer turns 55— that's 10,000 each day!



## Nominations Sought for MGS Board

As the chairperson of the nominating committee, I would like to invite MGS members to participate and work on this committee. To volunteers and/or for more information, please contact: jackiekellygeriatrics@yahoo.com or telephone: 207-998-2885.

Applications for the Board of Directors are now being accepted for the upcoming in the late winter of 2006.

According to MGS Bylaw's: Article III—Board of Directors

Section II Election Process: Nominations for the Board shall be made by members of the Society to the Nominating Committee. After deliberating, the Nominating committee shall present the final nominations to members-at-large at the Annual business Meeting for election by the members-at large.

We encourage multi-disciplined individuals to ensure diversity and promote statewide representation.

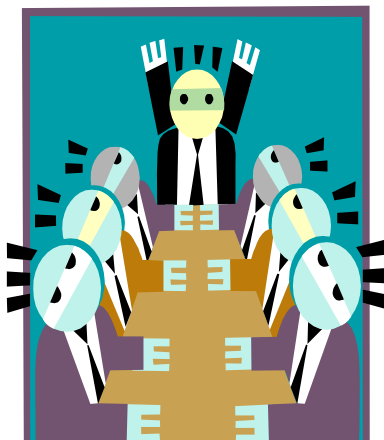
Currently we have seven

members of the board of directors. In November of 2005, Dr. Reuben Bell resigned as our president and Maggie Witherby moved out of state. According to MGS by-laws, we must have nine active positions. To accommodate our full compliment of members, we can have as many as fifteen.

Should you or someone you know would like to become a board member, you may do so by filling in a nomination application. Applications may be obtained by contacting Sharon Berz:

sberz@aroostooaging.org or Tel: 207 764 3396.

**Submitted by Jacqueline Kelly, RNC, Vice President**



## Legislation Affecting Maine Elders



Recently, Representative James Campbell introduced LD 1707, a "Resolve, Directing the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to Develop Strategies to Keep Senior Citizens Safe from Falls." The bill encourages the development of strategies by the Commissioner of the DHHS that would "improve awareness, education, and training of health professionals and providers to include falls risk assessment and targeted interventions."

LD 1782, "An Act to Prevent Elder and Dependent Adult Financial Abuse," was introduced by Sen. Arthur Mayo III. This LD was referred to the Committee on Insurance and Financial Services. When employees and officers of a financial institution suspect financial

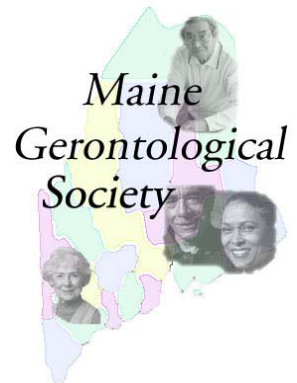
exploitation, they will be required to report their suspicions.

LD 1348, "An Act to Increase Funding for Meals on Wheels Program," was introduced by Rep. James Campbell and ended up with the Appropriations and Financial Affairs. This LD proposes to reimburse Meals on Wheels volunteers for their transportation costs.

Information Provided by  
Graham Newson,  
M4A Executive Director



**Factoid!** Life expectancy at birth in Japan is now 81 years, the highest in the world!



## Diana Scully Appointed Maine Office of Elder Services Director

Diana Scully has extensive experience both within and outside government. She spent 15 years with the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission as their part-time Executive Director.

She was also self employed as a consultant working with 60 Maine organizations.

Her experience in state government includes work as a nonpartisan legislative analyst and as a staff member of the Health and Institutional Services Committee, and service as Director of Special Projects for the Department of Human Services, Director of Welfare Employment, and

Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation.

Her work with the Governor's Long Term Care Task Force in 1980 provides her experience with the Home Based Care Act which came to fruition as a direct result of the Task Force.

She comes to the Office of Elder Services from the Office of Adult Mental Health Services.

MGS Secretary  
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**We're on the web!**

[www.umaine.edu/  
mainecenteronaging/  
MGS2.htm](http://www.umaine.edu/mainecenteronaging/MGS2.htm)

## MGS Mission Statement

The **Maine Gerontological Society** (MGS) is a statewide association of individuals interested in issues affecting older adults in the state of Maine. The Society serves as the leading interdisciplinary association on aging in the state, focusing on aging education, practice and research in policy perspective.

The Society is dedicated to giving equal voice to the diverse interests of the academic, practice and general communities and promoting active participation by administrators and planners, policy-makers, practitioners, educators, researchers, business people, students, older adults, and others.

Programs of the MGS emphasize education and training opportunities for those who want to be well informed and play an active role in shaping aging policy and services in the years to come. The fact that Maine is the oldest state in the nation in terms of the age of its citizenry ensures that the Society will continue to have a crucial role to play in the years ahead.

**A Report from The Treasurer:** I'm pleased to report that the Maine Gerontological Society has no outstanding debts. Our revenue this year has totaled \$1,824.00—all from annual dues.

**Roberta Downey, Treasurer**

## White House Conference On Aging Update

The White House Conference on Aging was held in December 2005 and included 1,200 WHCoA delegates.

Delegates supported 50 out of 73 proposed resolutions.

Proposed resolutions were promulgated on a local grass roots level as a result of 400 events that were organized around the country to seek feedback from com-

munity members regarding needs of elders. A seventeen member policy committee reviewed the resolutions. The top priorities include:

1. Reauthorizing the Older Americans Act by June 2006;
2. Improving state and local-based integrated delivery systems; and
3. Promoting enrollment of seniors into the Medicare Prescription drug program.

For further information regarding the results and activities of the White House Conference on Aging, contact your local area agency on aging or go to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging website: [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org).

Maine has five Area Agencies on Aging which can be located in the white pages of your telephone directory.

MGS submitted a series of policy recommendations at the White House conference. These recommendations arose out of the MGS February 2005 conference, "At the Crossroads, Aging Policy in Maine."

Recommendations from the MGS conference can be viewed at the MGS website. The MGS website is sponsored by the University of Maine's Center on Aging: [www.umaine.edu/  
mainecenteronaging/MGS2.htm](http://www.umaine.edu/mainecenteronaging/MGS2.htm)