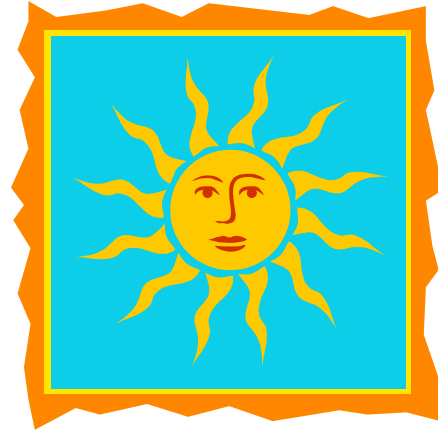


Mid-Atlantic OAMNews
“Daynight” Days of Summer
July/August, 2004



This newsletter is sponsored by:
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, PC(USA)
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Mid-Atlantic OAMNews – is a bi-monthly e-newsletter dedicated to the promotion of spiritual health and well-being of older adults and their families – offering information, resources, model ministries, stories, and humor! Visit our web-site at www.synatlantic.org and click on Older Adult Ministries. Jan McGilliard, Editor

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Older Adult Ministries Awareness Survey

The survey results may be viewed in their entirety at www.civic.bev.net/oam. Thanks to all who participated in this effort to learn what people are thinking. Here is a summary of what you told us:



Older adults are *actively* involved as volunteers in our congregations! Individuals of all (adult) ages responded to the survey, but 75% were over age 55, 2/3 women.

There is consensus about two things:

- 1) There is awareness of and sensitivity to the special needs of older adults, and
- 2) There is a need for greater attention to the elderly and their families. Most (80%) feel their congregations are involved in providing visitation to homebound, hospitalized, and assisted-living residents, and many feel the church does a good job of connecting older adults with community resources.

Areas for improvement/consideration:

- Attention to the special needs of older adults
- Educational opportunities for end of life decision making and health education
- Support groups for grief, dementia, and caregivers
- Mentoring opportunities and intergenerational activities
- Knowledge of churches other than one's own – knowledge of national trends

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ASA-NCOA National Conference: The Road Ahead: Taking the Journey Together

San Francisco was the site of the joint annual conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on the Aging in April. ASA celebrated its 50th anniversary and received a giant AARP Membership Card at this excellent conference of 4000 participants and presenters. Internet homework is essential before you attend because there are more than 1800 workshops to choose from on any topic you can name, not to mention keynotes, pre-conference offerings, site visits, media, and an exhibit hall as big as a football field!

One workshop stood out for me: It was entitled **Collecting Our Way to Immortality:**

Hoarding and Cluttering Behavior Among Elders,

in which four professionals presented aspects of this OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder). One conference participant was brave enough to admit she's a hoarder (gold star for honesty!). The rest of us sat spellbound, pondering the implications of our collecting gone mad. Are you a pack rat? This car holds all the worldly possessions of a homeless man who cannot bear to part with anything. To us it may look like trash but to him it is treasure. Here's a link to an excellent article on the serious problem of hoarding by Fred Penzel, Ph.D:



<http://www.homestead.com/westsuffolkpsych/Hoarding.html>

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Aging in America: The Years Ahead, an award-winning film by Writer/Director Julie Winokur was introduced in the same workshop by Ms. Winokur, who showed photographs of the artifacts and poignant effects of hoarding. Over the course of seven years Julie and Ed traveled from coast to coast exploring the highs and lows of growing old. This film and book take us to the extreme ends of longevity while asking 'What is a good old age?' The film is a pricey but good investment at \$85 for non-profit or community organizations. To order, contact: Media Library, Tel: 800-343-5540 or www.talkingeyesmedia.org.

Miriam Dunson receives NICA's Spirituality & Aging Award

Each year the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging honors an individual for outstanding contributions to the field of spirituality and aging. Jan McGilliard had the privilege of giving the citation and presented Miriam with the award. Miriam recently retired as the General Assembly's Associate for Older Adult Ministries for the Office on Aging in Louisville, Kentucky. Pictured: Miriam and Jan (front); Patt Schroeder (past president of POAMN) and Dr. Stephen Sapp. It was a proud and happy occasion.



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Come celebrate 15 years of Older Adult Ministries

At Synod Assembly this year (July 14-16), the Older Adult Ministries Committee will be recognized for 15 years of service to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic. Come join us at First Presbyterian Church in Concord, North Carolina for the work and celebration of this important governing body. Click here for the meeting schedule:

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OAM Calendar

Hold these dates!

October 4-8: **Fall Older Adult Conference at Montreat**

Conference theme: On Wings Like Eagles Featured speaker: James Reese

To view the brochure go here! http://www.montreat.org/2004_conference_schedule.htm

Or contact Montreat at (828) 669-2911

October 27-30: **Annual POAMN Conference** (Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network). Theme: Pathway of Spiritual Growth: Thriving After 55. Location: El Caribe Resort and Conference Center in Daytona Beach, Florida. For more information go to: <http://www.pcusa.org/olderadults/events.htm>

Need a workshop or retreat? View some of the possibilities in this brochure: click on: <http://civic.bev.net/OAM/congresources.htm> and look under Ministry Models.

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Pastoral Concerns

Elder David Greene of Portsmouth, Virginia: For the past two years David has been actively involved as a co-opted member of the Older Adult Ministries Committee, lending his expertise, time, and energy for the good of the cause. David is in the Portsmouth Naval Hospital. He has been diagnosed with cancer of the liver and lungs.

It has metastasized, is malignant, and he and Betty are consulting with the medical community regarding a course of treatment. Please keep David and his entire family in prayer. If you wish to send David a card or note: 3920 Harwood Lane, Portsmouth, VA 23703.

Remembering Ed: With great sadness we announce that **Edward A. Powers** died on June 24 from complications of by-pass surgery. Ed served as Chair of the Synod's Older Adult Ministries Committee for six years and continued to serve in an advisory role, bringing skill and wisdom from a full career in the field of gerontology at Iowa State University and at University of North Carolina (Greensboro). When Ed learned of his heart problems, he reassessed his life and made the bold and courageous step to retire early. Ed and his wife Joyce have been avid and active volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and Red Cross disaster work, often leaving on a few hours' notice to work a disaster site somewhere in the U.S.



These are a few of the lessons I learned from Ed:

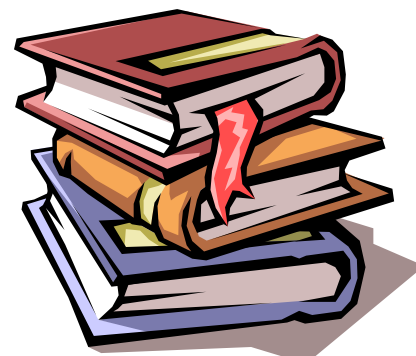
- Don't give up on things you believe in – persevere
- Live in REALITY – lay out assets & liabilities – then work with what you have
- Cut to the chase! Make achievable, measurable goals
- Less is more – live with simplicity and grace – keep only what's important
- Make a plan for your life – make priorities - then follow through
- Take significant time out – at least three weeks at one time if possible, to relax & re-energize
- Keep God at the center

Memorial gifts may be sent to: Habitat for Humanity, 438 W. Friendly Ave., Greensboro, NC 27401 or American Red Cross, Emergency Services, Greensboro Chapter, 1501 Yanceyville St., Greensboro, NC 27405. You may also include the Mid-Atlantic Older Adult Ministries Endowment Fund #520A5004 and send to Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, PO Box 27026, Richmond, VA 23261-7026.

Resources+++Resources+++Resources!!!!!!!

Seeing Beyond the Wrinkles: Stories of Ageless Courage, Humor and Faith, by Rev. Charles Tindell.

A book of short stories reflecting on the joys and fears of growing older, exploring a great variety of themes: stereotypes, role models, wisdom, love, joy, caring, friendship, fortitude, and many more. Insightful reading for folks in post-retirement years and those who care for



them. Paperback, ISBN #1-882349-04-0, \$12.95. Companion guide: Seeing Beyond the Wrinkles: Study Guide for Personal Reflection and Spiritual Growth, ISBN 1-882349-06-7, \$4.95. Free shipping for those who mention this review. Contact SENIOR SENSE at quickpublishing@sbcglobal.net or by phone: 1-888-PUBLISH.

The Enduring Human Spirit: Thought-provoking Stories on Caring for Our Elders, by Rev. Charles Tindell. This book combines real-life stories with real-life questions about how it is we provide care, quality of life, and meaning for our elders. Aimed at both professional care givers and the general public seeking better solutions to excellence in care provision. ISBN 1-882883-51-9, \$16. Free shipping to those who mention this review! Contact Kelly@IdyllArbor.com or phone (888-97BOOKS).

Faith & Illness: Reflections on God's Sustaining Love, by Nancy Groves, M.S.W. This book is a lovely collection of reflections; a companion for anyone living with illness. It uses poetic prose, reflective questions, and prayers to remind readers of God's sustaining compassion, love, and comfort. It also serves as a guide to understanding the emotional impact of serious illness. Available from Patient Press, 6475 Perimeter Dr., Box 110, Dublin, OH 43016. www.patientpress.com. \$9.95, ISBN 0-9701545-3-4.

Revelations on the Road: a pilgrim journey, by Lynn W. Huber. This captivating journey story invites you to reflect on your own path as you walk with Lynn on the one she has trod. Each chapter offers meditations designed to help you engage the issue in your own life—like having a taste of spiritual direction. \$17 + \$4 handling. Order from Wovenword Press: 1-888-773-7738; email: books@wovenword.com; web: www.wovenword.com.

If you have a story, poetry, a model ministry, concern, or event to share, please contact Jan McGilliard at 540-552-3233 or send her an e-mail at jmcgill@bev.net. Photos are a nice addition!

Happy Summer!!

Jan McGilliard, Editor