

## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Karen Wright*  
Executive Director

### Hug A Volunteer ...

When it gets close to Valentine's Day, I am always reminded of the people I love and of the many HomePorts volunteers who are so generous with their time and talents in helping our members. I doubt any of them know just how much they mean to us.

We do our very best to be kind to our volunteers. We try to give them as much advance notice as possible when their services are required, and give them an educated estimate as to the amount of time the request will require.

Occasionally, a doctor's appointment will take much longer than anticipated, and in those cases, our volunteers step up and take the extra time required, always without a complaint. We've run into a problem lately, however, that I feel a need to address.

If you call HomePorts and ask for a ride, whether it be to physical therapy, a doctor's office or the supermarket, Sally or I will always ask how long you think it will take. We do this so that when we call a volunteer, they can decide whether or not they have the time to devote to the task. Now, when you leave your scheduled appointment and then ask the volunteer to add on additional stops, it puts that volunteer in a VERY awkward situation. They realize that you can't otherwise run this extra errand, so they inevitably say, "sure," whether or not they actually have time to do it.

Please understand that we want you to get your errands done, but you MUST let us know BEFORE we schedule a volunteer if you need to make additional stops. In that way, the volunteer will be sure to have enough time set aside out of their busy schedule to assist you without resentment. I would also request that you limit the total number of stops. Asking a volunteer for more than three hours is difficult. In many cases, we could schedule one volunteer to take you to an appointment and one to run your errands and take you home.

So, please consider our volunteers' time. They are so kind and generous with it. Without their continued devotion to HomePorts, we would not exist.

### Monthly Members Luncheon

February 18, 12:30 pm  
Uncle Charlie's Bistro  
We are trying different local restaurants this year! Call HomePorts to make your reservation.

### Save The Date ... HomePorts Health Fair October 20

HomePorts will hold its flagship event in the Fall in 2016, in order to offer flu shots. We will partner with the Kent County School System to present a day of free health screenings, exhibits, and expert speakers. All free!

### Advertise With HomePorts

Our approved vendors have the exclusive opportunity to advertise on our web site. The cost is modest and the information reaches hundreds. Call for more information.

### Save Your Redner's Supermarket Receipts!

Redner's will donate 1% of all purchases to HomePorts. Please save your cash register tapes and bring them to the HomePorts office or mail them to HomePorts.



Executive Director Karen Wright registers incoming President Jane Hukill for the annual meeting on February 1.



Attendees enjoy lunch!

## HOMEPORTS ANNUAL MEETING

HomePorts annual meeting was held February 1, followed by lunch with 30 members and volunteers in attendance. Outgoing President Jim Donaghy reviewed the State of HomePorts, a very positive report. Currently there are 98 members, and more are expected to join in 2016. Of those, 7 receive financial assistance with the annual fee.

Our 60 volunteers responded to over 400 requests in 2015. There are 67 approved providers in 34 service categories. He noted the popularity of the four education programs held in 2015. With assets of \$61,000, he told the group that the finances are breaking even. "We have good controls over these costs, and our employees work very hard to stay within the budget," he said.

New Board members were elected: Katie Davis, RN, Trish Focht, RN, Jon Hanley, and Kristie Hartman, RN. Jane E. Hukill, a founder of HomePorts, was elected as President, Courtney Sjostrom, as Vice-President, Bill Cameron as Treasurer, and Jayne Heckles as Secretary. Other Board members are Jean Austin, Wayne Benjamin, MD, Joe Harding, and John R. Leek.

## KENT COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RECOGNIZES HOMEPORTS VENDOR

Congratulations to Loving Touch Home Care, LLC, a sponsor of HomePorts events and approved vendor. The Kent County Chamber of Commerce recognized Loving Touch in a ceremony this past January as Best New Business In 2015!

## BOOK REVIEW

by Muriel Cole

*Embers*, by Sandor Marai, is a short novel about an old man living in somewhat mysterious isolation in a castle in the early 20th century. He receives a visit from a man he has not seen in 41 years, and their climatic meeting is the subject of the book. Beautifully written, it was published first in German in 1999. A different and highly recommended read!



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## SAVE OUR HOSPITAL

HomePorts has been in the forefront of discussions about changes affecting our local hospital services. Wayne Benjamin, MD, a HomePorts Board member, is a co-leader with Gerry O'Connor, MD, of "Save Our Shore Medical Center at Chestertown" ([www.facebook.com/savechesterriverhospital](http://www.facebook.com/savechesterriverhospital)). Incoming President Jane Hukill has accompanied them to Annapolis to meet with others who share these concerns. The Shore Regional Health System is a key partner of HomePorts events, and we continue to ask for their mindfulness of the high percentage of seniors in Kent County, who need this hospital.



Gerry O'Connor, MD  
Photo courtesy Lloyd Fox, Baltimore Sun

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## SEVEN TIPS FOR WINTER HEALTH FOR OLDER ADULTS

Snow and ice can be a painful one-two punch, especially for seniors who have arthritis or difficulty walking due to a previous stroke or other illness. A single fall can cause debilitating and costly injuries, but a few simple tips can help older adults stay safe and healthy through the winter months.

### 1. Tread Carefully

To help avoid falls, wear appropriate shoes outdoors and put road salt, sand or kitty litter on sidewalks and driveways. Better yet, if the walks haven't been cleared, ask friends or relatives for help with errands such as grocery shopping.

### 2. Avoid Overwork

Find someone to handle snow shoveling and other strenuous outdoor tasks. Cold weather causes blood vessels to constrict, which increases the risk of heart attack for people with heart disease or other conditions that strain the heart's ability to pump blood.

### 3. Exercise Indoors

Staying indoors does not mean being inactive. Keep in shape by walking in place, using a stationary bike or working out with a fitness video, available at the local library. Daily stretching exercises can help maintain flexibility. Check with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

### 4. Bundle Up

Cold temperatures are a serious threat to seniors, especially those with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. A person who wanders from home without proper clothing in the winter can quickly fall victim to frostbite or hypothermia. Families should consider installing alarm systems that signal whenever an outside door is opened.

### 5. Keep The Heat On

Inadequate indoor heat also can cause hypothermia. Keep home temperatures above 65 degrees and dress in layers to maintain body temperature. If you have difficulty paying the heating bill, contact your gas or electric utility about ways to continue service through the winter.

### 6. Clear The Air

If you heat your home with a fireplace, gas furnace or gas-powered space heater, invest in carbon monoxide detectors, which can be purchased at a home improvement store for as little as \$30. Carbon monoxide in the air can displace the oxygen in your blood stream and cause headache, dizziness, nausea, convulsions and even death within two hours. The effects can be even faster for people with heart or respiratory illnesses.

### 7. Socialize

Depression is more common in the winter months, and bad weather can mean social isolation for many seniors. Make efforts to spend time with family, friends and neighbors, and when weather makes visiting difficult, pick up the phone for a chat.

*Provided by the Center for Aging & Community  
University of Indianapolis*

## NEW MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

When you're not yet ready for the services that HomePorts provides but you think it could be a big help to you in the future, what should you do? Become a Sustaining Member! The \$350 fee is the same, but since you do not receive services, your donation is tax-deductible. Depending on your IRS marginal tax bracket, this can reduce the annual cost of your support by 28% or more. And you will be invited to events and receive the bi-monthly newsletter. Should you need services during the tax year, your membership can be converted to the Full-Service Membership at any time.



## THE MOLST FORM

All older adults in Maryland should complete and retain a copy of their "Medical Order for Life Sustaining Treatment" (or "MOLST" form). It is a physician's order defining the care the person will receive in Emergency rooms and elsewhere should a medical emergency occur. State law requires that each person be consulted regarding the content of this form and that a copy of the form be given to the person or the representative within 48 hours of completion. This is a life and death matter. This is the document that determines whether a person will be resuscitated, have a feeding tube installed, or be placed on a respirator along with a number of other medical interventions. In cases leading to death, these measures are clearly not reversible. Check your records and advise your family as to the location of this form and your wishes.

## FIRST FRIDAY DINNER

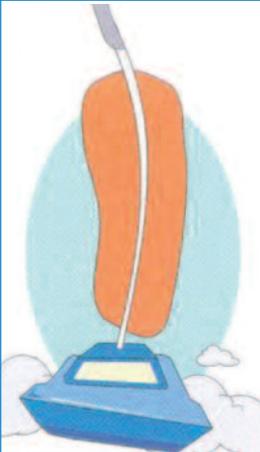
Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy companionship with members and friends!

- Swan Point Inn (Private Room), 20658 Wilkins Ave., Rock Hall
- March 4, 2016, 5:00 pm, Cost \$12.00 plus tax and tip
- Call or e-mail John Sirna, 610-212-6665, or sirna@verizon.net
- Confirm by February 28th

## NEW RESEARCH CITES BENEFITS OF VILLAGES

At the 2015 Conference of the National Village-to-Village Network, researchers from the University of California at Berkeley summarized conclusions of their study of the "Village" model:

*There is substantial evidence that social engagement and active community participation promote a number of salutary outcomes, including better health and well-being, enhanced recovery from illness, and aging in place. As the aging population increases, there will be an urgent need to promote service access, social support, and social engagement, especially for individuals who do not live in service-rich living environments such as supported housing or qualify for means-tested support services. This study suggests that Villages represent a promising new model, with the potential for positively affecting seniors in ways that may reduce social isolation, expand access to services, increase well-being, and increase seniors' confidence in their ability to age in their own homes. Members reporting the greatest impacts are those who participate in Village-sponsored social and education events, use companionship services, volunteering, or receive technology assistance.*



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