

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Jim Donaghy
President

The New Year brings to close a fine year for the HomePorts community. I want to thank all of you for making it so. Our 116 members are supported by 75 volunteers, 73 providers, as well as over 100 individual donors and local businesses. We are joined by community partnership organizations such as Chester River Health System, Kent County Health Department, and Upper Shore Aging. The idea of neighbors helping neighbors to live successfully in their own homes as they age was experienced everyday in Kent County during 2013. This could not have happened without your help, commitment, and time. So again, THANKS!

I saw many of you at the recent Christmas Bazaar held by Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The crowds were large, and people were in a giving spirit. HomePorts was fortunate to be one of the community groups chosen by Emanuel to share in the Bazaar's success. As requested by Emmanuel, their gift will be used by HomePorts to support members in need of membership financial aid. It is a wonderful thing - this idea of neighbors helping neighbors.

I want to let you know about a new HomePorts project that is being introduced in 2014. We were very concerned to learn that the majority, 78%, of fall injuries among older people occurs within the home environment. Many of these falls, and the resulting injuries, can be prevented simply by taking steps to eliminate or fix potential hazards in and around the home. To this end, HomePorts has established a home safety committee, chaired by John Leek. John is in the process of forming and training a "safety crew" of volunteers who will identify safety hazards in members' homes. (If any of you are interested in joining the "safety crew", please call Karen at 1-443-480-0940). When your membership is up for renewal, you will be contacted to arrange a home visit, resulting in a report for your use suggesting ways to reduce safety hazards. The crew, if asked, will also change and replace any ceiling burned out light bulbs, replace smoke detector batteries, install non-slip tape in a tub or shower, and put carpet tape under any loose rug edges. Home is a safe harbor when hazards go away ... all at no cost to you.

Last, but not least, I want to invite members to the annual Board meeting on Monday, January 27, 2014, 1 pm, at the HomePorts office. I hope to see you there.

What's Up?

- **January 25**
Seminar sponsored by
Chester River Health
Foundation
10:00 am - Noon
Kent County Public Library
Program Theme:
*Your Will, Your Way:
How and Why*
Reserve your spot by
calling 410-810-5681 or
send an email to:
jpierce@chesterriverhealth.org
- **January 27**
HomePorts Annual
Members Meeting
1:00 pm
Chestertown Town Hall
2nd Floor
- **February 20**
HomePorts Member
Luncheon at the
Fish Whistle
12:30 pm

Chinese New Year 2014

The new moon on January 30 at 11:20 pm PST begins the year of the Wood Horse. In Chinese astrology, the Horse year is considered a fortunate year that brings luck and good things. People born in Horse years (2014, 2002, 1990, 1978, 1966, 1954, 1942, 1930, 1918, 1906) are bright, cheerful, fun loving and popular.



GROWING NUMBER OF VILLAGES

Homeports is a member of the national "Village-to-Village Network", an organization that helps communities establish and manage aging-in-place villages. The Network has reported that 39 states now have communities with villages, a total of 120 open Villages, with 100 more in development. HomePorts, covering greater Kent County, encompasses a much larger geographic area than most and continues to be the only group of this type on the Eastern Shore.



HOMEPORTS BOARD CHANGES

HomePorts members will vote on three new Board candidates at its January meeting: Wayne Benjamin, MD, Jayne Heckles, and Courtney Sjostrom. Immense thanks go to outgoing Board members Bunny Adams, John Durocher, MD, Gerry Edwards, Charlie Hawkins, Jane Hukill, Nancy Holland, and Marty Knight.

*December Board Meeting (left to right):
Bunny Adams, Herb Friedman, Nancy Holland
and Ann Murray.*

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY?

HomePorts' top priority is keeping members safe at home. With winter weather upon us, it's an excellent time to review your emergency plans. Are your flashlights working? Are emergency numbers near at hand?

Here are just a few tips for emergency preparedness ...

- Post emergency numbers by your telephone.
- Create an emergency communications plan with your family.
- Assemble an emergency kit. Include special needs items, first aid supplies, bottled water, flashlights.
- Keep a battery powered radio and extra batteries nearby.
- Display your house numbers in a location visible from the road.

Members will be receiving materials from the Kent Count Office of Emergency Services, which should be reviewed and shared with family and friends.



4th Annual Healthy Aging Symposium

April 15, 2014

8:00 am to 2:00 pm • Kent County Middle School

Keynote Speaker, Walter Ettinger, MD
Chief Medical Officer, University of Maryland Medical System

We are planning another successful event with dynamic speakers, the latest information on many topics, and a keynote presentation by Walter Ettinger, MD, Chief Medical Officer, University of Maryland Medical System. His presentation, entitled *The Health Care Revolution: What Does It Mean For You?*, will address the changing health care system and the potential effects on seniors. We have also asked him to give his forecast for community hospitals nationwide and for the Upper Shore. Don't miss this opportunity to hear a wonderful presentation, and show your support for quality health care in Kent County.

Participants will attend three workshop sessions led by local practitioners. Topics will include Hearing and Primary Care, Home Safety, and Preparation of Long-Term Plans. In addition, you will be able to visit various exhibits and displays featuring the latest information and services available from local and regional home and health care organizations.

Sponsors and advertisers help keep the registration fee low so that seniors at all income levels are able to participate.

Exhibit Hall, 2013 Symposium



Walter H. Ettinger, Jr., MD, MBA, is senior vice president and chief medical officer for the University of Maryland Medical System. Dr. Ettinger serves as a member of the System's senior leadership team with administrative responsibility for monitoring and ensuring the safety and quality of patient care.



*Planning for the 2014 Symposium:
John Christie, Muriel Cole and Sandra Willet Jackson.*

DECLINE IN DEATHS RESULTING FROM CANCER

From the AARP Blog, January 9, 2014

The cancer death rate over the past 20 years has dropped 20%, according to a new report from the American Cancer Society. The report states the decline translates to roughly 1.3 million people who avoided dying from the disease between 1991 and 2010. Much of that progress, notes the report, *has been due to advances in prevention, early detection, and treatment.*

It's especially good news for middle-aged African American men, whose death rate from cancer dropped by 50%, mostly because so many have stopped smoking. Even so, black men continue to have the highest cancer death rates among all ethnic groups in the U.S., about double that of Asian Americans, who have the lowest rates. The other bad news is that cancer is still the leading cause of death among adults ages 40 through 79, and the first or second leading cause of death among females of all ages. While the death rate may have been declining for most groups, for white women 80 or older it has remained the same.

The most progress in slowing down the death rate has been made in colon, breast and prostate cancer deaths, mostly because screening for these cancers can catch tumors early

and produce better outcomes. But overuse of screening tests remains controversial. While few question getting a colonoscopy, there has been more debate over what some critics say is the excess use of mammograms and PSA (prostate-specific antigen) tests. So does this new report really mean this type of screening is reducing cancer deaths? John Santa, M.D., Medical Director of Consumer Reports Health, which has been studying the overuse of tests and screening, cautions against drawing any conclusions about cause and effect from the report's data. *It's tricky concluding anything about causality, he says. For example, stomach cancer has declined dramatically and there's no screening for it. But something has changed in our environment so that stomach cancer is just not occurring as frequently.* While PSA testing remains controversial because it often gives false alarms, Santa says, *mammogram screening works better, especially in those over 50.*

No question that it's great that the cancer death rate is declining, he adds, but it's not only screening that can help prevent more deaths. *We still need to play it safe and do all the healthy things, like eat right, get exercise and quit smoking.*

One can pay back the loan of gold ...
but one dies forever in debt to those
who are kind.

Malayan Proverb

WE 
VOLUNTEERS

HomePorts volunteers will again be recognized at a afternoon party on Thursday, February 13th at Chester River Landing. You are the backbone of our organization and we appreciate your dedication, hard work, and commitment to our members. Please mark your calendar and watch for your invitation.

HOMEPORTS AS A BEQUEST



As a 501(c)3 organization, HomePorts welcomes memorial donations from those who want to remember a friend or family member who has died. A bequest is a gift from an estate after a loved one's death, usually described in the donor's will and is generally deducted from the overall value of the estate. All contributions to HomePorts are used to strengthen our services and our membership capabilities.