

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Karen Wright
Executive Director

As I write this I am on a plane to Oakland, CA, for the Village-to-Village Network annual conference. I have been Executive Director for about a month now and am fully aware of my predecessors' large shoes that I must try to fill. I still have a great deal to learn and I'm hoping that I will return from Oakland with a better understanding and greater skills with which to serve our members, volunteers and providers.

By way of introduction, my husband, Jon, and I moved to Kent County from the Philadelphia area 18 years ago when he took a job managing a new marina in Rock Hall. We have two children: Laura, 20, a senior at the College of Charleston and Stuart, 17, a senior at Kent County High. Since moving to Kent County I have worked for an advertising firm, a non-profit educational organization and a bank. In my spare time

I enjoy cooking, reading, sailing, running and knitting. We have two Labrador retrievers, a cat and a fish.

In the short time that I have been involved with HomePorts, I have found myself continuously in awe of our dedicated volunteers who so selflessly give of their time. I am truly humbled by their generosity. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you in the coming months - to put faces to the names, and names to many of the faces I've seen over the years. To that end, I would very much like to update our databases to include email addresses. If you use email, please send me your address so we can better communicate with you. In the meantime, I'll request that you bear with me as I learn the ropes. Please don't hesitate to tell me when I've made a mistake. In some cases, it's the only way I'll know. If you have suggestions as to how we can improve our services, please let me know. I can be reached by telephone at 443-480-0940 or via email at Karen@homeports.org.

NEW LIBRARIAN COMES HOME TO MARYLAND

Chestertown is an "incredible community" with "strong support" for the library, says Jackie Adams, the new Executive Director of the Kent County Library.

Adams had been head of the library in Yarmouth, Mass., a town of 20,000 on Cape Cod, about the same population as Kent County. However, she had worked in Carroll County for many years and saw the Kent County job as "a great opportunity to get back to Maryland."

Adams was born and raised in the Philadelphia area and is a graduate of Chestnut Hill College and Drexel University. She lives in town, just a few blocks from the library, in Chestertown's Historic District, and has been enjoying local events such as First Fridays.

Jackie has high praise for the Library's Board of Trustees for getting the library "back on track" and for "the wonderful staff here." She is particularly interested in community outreach. She and the library staff are gearing up for a major milestone

for the library. Next year is the 50th anniversary of the first public library in Kent County and the library is planning a year-long celebration. There will be plenty of opportunity for Kent County residents to participate. "We will need pictures and input from the community," she said.





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ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

As we age, many of us experience brief memory lapses - we forget a word or a friend's name. This is frustrating, but usually not serious. The loss of intellectual functioning caused by Alzheimer's disease, however, is not a normal part of aging. Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative, progressive disorder that damages the brain's nerve cells resulting in loss of memory, thinking and language skills, and behavioral changes. It is the most common cause of dementia among people aged 65 and older, and as many as 5.1 million Americans may have Alzheimer's disease.

Although memory loss can be a symptom of Alzheimer's disease, other signs are usually also evident. These may include confusion about time and place, difficulty with familiar actions such as getting dressed, trouble following directions and conversations, impaired judgment when making decisions, changes in mood and personality, and difficulty with complex mental assignments, such as tasks involving numbers.

If you have concerns about any of these symptoms you should speak with your health care provider. Depression, drug side-effects and other disorders can cause similar signs and may be treatable. There is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, but several drugs are available that can provide some relief of symptoms and may slow the decline in mental function to some extent. For more information and resources, check out The Alzheimer's Foundation website at alzfdn.org.

Recommended Reading for Alzheimer Families



Author Jolene Brackey has written a book to help families handle the changes Alzheimer's brings. *Creating Moments of Joy* focuses on looking beyond the disease's challenges. Instead, it says people should focus more energy on making joyful moments, since a person with short-term memory loss lives from moment to moment. The book is available for loan at the HomePorts office, or may be purchased at www.amazon.com.

Monthly Luncheon Schedule

The HomePorts monthly luncheon will be held at the Fish Whistle on Thursday, November 17th at 12:45 pm.

For reservations, call Louise O'Brien at 410-810-2726 or send an email to Louise at lobrien@verizon.net.

No luncheon is scheduled for December.

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