

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Muriel Cole
President

In the planning stages of HomePorts, we frequently heard the question, "What will I get for my money?" We studied other "villages" and found a variety of offerings for members. Some emphasize social events, trips, meals together. Others have little or no interaction among members, preferring to focus on volunteer help to members as well as referrals to recommended services. Our community seems to like a combination of benefits. One aspect that we continue to emphasize is an educational one. We organize at least one educational event each quarter, with a speaker and refreshments. A Chinese proverb says, "If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people." This quarter we are offering a mega-event for the whole community: a half-day conference with a host of expert speakers, and opportunities to ask questions and learn about issues that all ages need to know more about. Please plan to attend. Your participation will be a message that people care about the subject of Aging in Kent County.

Healthy Aging – A Community Perspective

March 30, 2011 at Hynson Lounge, Hodson Hall, Washington College
Registration: 8:00 am - 8:45 am • Symposium: 8:45 am - 1:30 pm
Includes continental breakfast, refreshments, and lunch
Fee: \$30. To register call (443) 480-0940

Organized by HomePorts, with sponsorship from Chester River Health System, Upper Shore Aging, and Washington College's Center for Environment and Society.

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Leslie Wendel and her late husband Dick, bought an historic, circa 1750 house in Chestertown in 1990. After 26 years in a large 18th century house in Connecticut, and with retirement looming, they had decided it was time for a change. They developed a three-page list describing the perfect place to live. When they got to Chestertown, quite by accident, "everything on the list was here," Leslie said. Leslie is a former reporter for The Hartford Courant and The New York Times and worked in Development at Brown University for 13 years. After being widowed last year, Leslie joined Home Ports in December. One month later, she had foot surgery and was gratefully dependent on HomePorts volunteer drivers. She is also a volunteer, working on the HomePorts newsletter. "Number one on our list of the perfect place was a town with a sense of community. HomePorts epitomizes that sense of community," she said.



What's Up?

March 9th
Ash Wednesday, Lent begins

March 14th and 15th
MVA on wheels at High and Cross Streets from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

March 17th
HomePorts 'Wearing of the Green' Luncheon at the Fish Whistle, 1:00 pm

March 30th
HomePorts Symposium
(see the President's message for details)

Are Your Vaccinations Up To Date?



Hopefully you've had your flu shot. But do you know there are other vaccinations the Center for Disease Control recommends for seniors?

If you haven't had the vaccinations listed on the reverse side, check with your physician or contact the Kent County Health Department at 410-778-1350.

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HomePorts is a non-profit 501(c)3 membership alliance providing access to a wide range of services designed to offer mature adults what they need to remain in their own homes. Membership is available to those over 55 in Kent County and the adjacent area in Queen Anne's County within the 21620 zip code.

GPS MEDICAL ALARMS CAN SUMMON HELP FOR YOU ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES

The HomePorts February newsletter covered local medical alarm systems which notify emergency responders if you fall at home or outside within 1,000 feet of your house. But, what if you live on a farm or are visiting a friend or relative in another town or another state? There are also sophisticated alarm systems that track your location by GPS and can work anywhere in the United States. There are many such systems. A recent Google search for Mobile PERS (personal emergency response systems) brought 45,100 results.

Here are two mobile systems. One is Active Care, based in Salt Lake City, Utah. They offer what is essentially a medical alert cell phone. If you need help, you push a button and are in two-way contact with a care specialist who can summon help, even if you fall and are unconscious and can't push the button. They use GPS to locate you anywhere in the United States. There is no installation or activation fee and the cost is \$59 per month, including 120 free cell phone minutes per month. To learn more, check their website at www.activecare.com or call 877-219-6626.



Mobile Help, based in Boca Raton, Florida, also offers a system using GPS satellite tracking. They have a pendant worn around the neck when you are in your home, plus a separate mobile device for outside, to summon help anywhere in the United States. As with Active Care, it works only where there is a cellular signal. If your cell phone does not work wherever you are, this system won't work either. The cost is \$99 for a one-time activation fee and \$39.95 a month. To learn more, check their website at www.mobilehelpsys.com or call 800-800-1710.



Recommended Vaccinations, continued

- Pneumonia, or Pneumococcal, vaccine is recommended for adults 65 and older. Pneumococcal pneumonia kills thousands of older adults each year. The vaccine is safe and highly effective. One shot lasts most people up to 10 years. It does not protect against viral pneumonia. The vaccine is covered by Medicare.
- Zoster, Herpes Zoster or shingles, vaccine is recommended for adults 60 and older. Shingles is a painful rash which follows nerve pathways. You must have previously had chickenpox to get shingles - 99% of those over 40 have had them. Risk factors include being over 50, having a weakened immune system, and stress. The vaccine reduces the occurrence of shingles by 51 percent. The vaccine is covered under Medicare Part D.
- Tetanus/diphtheria or tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine (Tdap); a booster is recommended every 10 years for all adults who have previously been vaccinated. Adults, including those 65 and older, in contact with infants younger than 12 months (e.g., grandparents) should be vaccinated. Re-vaccination within 10 years may be indicated if you sustain a wound or injury.

Send Us Your News & Comments

This newsletter is published monthly. We welcome your news and comments. Please submit your article by the 10th of the month preceding publication.