



Connecting Older Adults

NH Commission on Aging*

* Help us name our newsletter. Details on Page 12

December 2021

New Hampshire Commission on Aging

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Workforce Issues Subject of November Commission Meeting

In anticipation of a more detailed discussion early next year on the workforce gaps and challenges faced by long term care providers, members of the NH State Commission on Aging learned more about the issue through presentations offered by industry leaders at the November 2021 Commission meeting.

Invited guests included Rich Lavers and Brian Gottlob from the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security; Gayle Davis, co-owner of Senior Helpers of Southern New Hampshire; Brendan Williams, President & CEO of New Hampshire Health Care Association; and Gina Balkus, CEO, Home Care, Hospice & Palliative Care Alliance of New Hampshire.

Lavers and Gottlob began with a presentation on the data and trends related to workforce issues facing long term care services in the state, including the effect that the pandemic has had on employment within the industry both leading up to this point and looking forward into the future. Their presentation also included ways that NH Employment Security is working to reduce current employment trends through innovative programs and partnerships with other organizations.

While challenges facing long term care providers in many ways match those faced by other sectors of the economy, one critical

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**NH Commission on Aging
Newsletter**
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Share Your Long Term Care Experiences

The New Hampshire Commission on Aging would be interested in learning about your experiences working for (or within) the long-term care system in NH. We welcome your insights and personal views—as well as your ideas—on this critical subject.

If you have something you would like to share, please send it by mail to: Rebecca Sky, NH Commission on Aging, 117 Pleasant St., Dolloff Building, 4th Floor, Concord, NH 03301. Your thoughts can also be emailed to Rebecca at rebecca.l.sky@nhcoa.nh.gov.

Workforce Issues, con't

difference lies in the fact that the majority of those employed in elder care are women who have been forced to juggle childcare, care of other family members and health concerns with their ability to remain or return to the workforce.

Davis, whose company provides non-medical home care services in four New Hampshire counties, offered first-hand information the challenges facing providers in a era of growing need for the services her company provides. Davis shared her experiences regarding hiring patterns, the benefits they offered as a company and ideas on ways barriers to those seeking employment could be addressed.

As head of the NH Health Care Association, Williams works directly with long-term care providers in skilled nursing facilities, continuing care retirement communities, and assisted living facilities. Staffing shortages at the facilities within the organization are acute and cause facilities to turn away older adults in need of care, leading to longer hospital stays and out-of-state placements. Open positions in food and nutrition areas at facilities are especially difficult to fill as long-term care facilities are competing with fast food restaurants that are paying higher wages.

The Home Care, Hospice & Palliative Care Alliance of NH is a non-profit member organization for licensed agencies delivering home health and hospice care in the state. Members include private, non-profit and social service agencies.

Balkus indicated that stresses in terms of employment are out there and the shortages are dire. Turnover rates are high as those providing services are exhausted and burnt out. Because of staff shortages, facilities are unable to meet the 48-hour Medicare requirement for at-home services to be provided for hospital or nursing home discharges forcing patients to remain in place until proper care can be found.

Balkus praised the increase in the Choices for Independence reimbursement rate approved in the latest state budget but indicated that the rate is still low compared to the cost for the services provided and pay rates available in other organization offering similar services—most notably those in states adjacent to the New Hampshire border.

The information provided by the presenters brought into focus a clearer picture of the varied challenges facing those who provide in-home and nursing home care in New Hampshire.

Using the information provided, Commissioners will continue the discussion at the January 24 meeting as part of the focus the Commission has placed on “advocating for initiatives that improve the lives of residents in long term care and build the resiliency and preparedness of the long-term care system against future disease outbreaks.”

Holiday Lights & Events

How does New Hampshire celebrate the holidays? Let's start with chocolate tours, holiday lights, festivals, shows and seasonal attractions! New Hampshire is a magical place this time of year and there's no shortage of holiday events and celebrations to help get you in the spirit of the season. So gather family and friends together, and make fun-filled memories this holiday season in New Hampshire. Here are just three of the holiday-themed events happenings this month as featured on www.visitnh.gov.

Candlelight Stroll at Strawbery Banke, Portsmouth

Enjoy a classic Seacoast holiday tradition: Strawbery Banke's annual Candlelight Stroll. Hundreds of candle lanterns set the open-air museum aglow, lining paths that wind through the museum's festively decorated historic homes. Listen to holiday carols and let the scent of woodsmoke guide you to the celebratory bonfire. Explore the furnished homes and be greeted by costumed role-players who will regale the traditions of holidays in years past!

Dates: December 4th-5th, 11th-12th & 18th-19th 2021.

Festival of Light, Enfield

La Salette of Enfield will be twinkling in all things holiday when the Festival of Lights returns to the Shrine this season. This year's theme "Mary...Uniting all Cultures!" celebrates the 175th anniversary of the September 19, 1846 apparition that was witnessed by two small shepherd children tending cows high in the French Alps. This year also marks the 70th anniversary for the Shrine's formal dedication in 1951. This popular holiday event opens 5pm Thanksgiving Day. Look for the lights from 5pm to 9pm Wednesday through Sunday until January 2, 2022. Pending Covid Protocols there maybe concerts & Caroling, the Nativity Display, and a train display.

Dates: Wednesday through Sunday 5pm to 9pm until January 2nd. No lights Monday and Tuesday evenings.

Gift of Lights, Loudon

Imagine over 4 million festive holiday lights all in one place. No need to image it, that's what you'll experience at New Hampshire Motor Speedway's Gift of Lights! More than 400 displays decorate the 2.5 mile long drive, where more lights than you can imagine illuminate the track and send you on a festive journey. Start your adventure by driving through the tunnel of lights! Check the schedule for days of operation when planning your trip.

Please note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the following events may be subject to cancellation at any time. Please be sure to check with event organizers for complete details prior to attending any events.

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Where to Find Holiday Events

Large or small, communities throughout New Hampshire are celebrating the holiday season. With so much going on, it's not always easy to find events that are happening—in the region, the state, or right around the corner.

Our research has led us to a few places to look including the VisitNH.gov website where we found the info here.

[New Hampshire Magazine](http://NewHampshireMagazine.com) features links to lists including musical events, plays, parades...and even where to find some of the best home lighting displays around the state.

If you're "in" to Facebook, a search on "EVENTS" will bring up a number of pages where organizations and communities have listed their events.

And, don't forget to check in with your local Senior Center. You're sure to find a wide variety of special events and programs that are both festive, fun and educational both in the coming weeks and throughout the year!

Are You A Caregiver?

"When I married, I took a vow – for better or worse – I don't think of myself as a caregiver".

"My mother cared for me when I was a child, now it's my turn to take care of her – I don't think of myself as a caregiver".

Are you in one of these situations? Or - do you help someone with chores, transportation or errands? Maybe you help with meals or make phone calls to check on a frail neighbor.

Whether you help a family member, neighbor or friend; whether you provide help daily, weekly or occasionally, you are a caregiver.

The NH Alliance for Healthy Aging wants you to know that there is help and you have a right to ask for resources.

Taking care of other people means you must take care of yourself too. The level of caregiving can increase over time making it harder to get a break or ask others to lend a hand. Give yourself permission to think of yourself as the caregiver that you are and identify the things that you could use help with. For.

According to AARP, about 177,000 family members in NH provide some type of caregiving each year. The holidays are the perfect time to discuss the care that you are providing with family and friends. Maybe there is more support available if you bring it to the attention of those around you.

AARP offers comprehensive resources including checklists and "Prepare to Care" guides, AARP's easy to download **Family Caregiving Guides**. The guides are available in different languages and for different populations.

For more information and resources contact ServiceLink at 1-866-634-9412, www.nhcopath.org.

The NH Alliance for Healthy Aging (NH AHA) is a statewide coalition of stakeholders focused on addressing the needs of older people in NH. For more information on NH AHA visit www.nhaha.info.



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ANY DAY, ANY TIME.**

24/7 Helpline **800.272.3900**

Find our free virtual programs online at **alz.org/MANH**

Free Radon Test Kits Available

New Hampshire has the highest rate of radon in the country. Radon is a naturally occurring gas that you can't see, smell or taste. Testing for radon is the only way to know if it is present in your home. Order your FREE radon test kit: <http://ow.ly/PZf950GH6U5>.

Tests are mailed to homeowners with instructions on how to perform the test. A postage paid envelope is included for the test kit to be sent back to the lab. Homeowners should allow 2 weeks to receive their test results. The results will include radon health risk information, what the test results mean and resources to fix their home.

The homeowner is responsible for the cost of mitigation. The **NH/DHHS Radon Program** can provide a list of mitigation specialists who can provide information on the cost of mitigation. The cost depends on the size and design of the home.

RAISE YOUR VOICE!

Let us know what's on your mind and what's important to you. Email us today!

**NHCOAnews@
gmail.com**

Managing Healthcare Expenses

Managing a long-term (chronic) health condition can take a financial toll on you and your family. There are the costs of medicines, testing, copays, travel, and more. But help is available from your doctor and programs specially designed to lower healthcare costs.

Understanding health insurance terms

As you navigate your way through the healthcare system, it is helpful first to understand some terms related to health insurance:

Primary Care Provider:

Someone who offers or helps you to access healthcare services. They may be a physician, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or physician assistant.

Deductible:

The amount you pay for healthcare services before your insurance kicks in. For example, if your deductible is \$500, your insurance provider will only pay for covered services once you have met the deductible.

Copay (copayment):

A set amount you pay for a service covered by your health insurance, usually at the time of service.

Network:

The providers, facilities, and suppliers your insurer partners with to offer healthcare services. For example, a doctor may be "in network" or "out of network."

Options for lower-cost healthcare

Private companies, nonprofits, and the state and federal government all offer free or low-cost programs to help pay for healthcare expenses. Here is a look at a few:

Copay/prescription assistance programs: These programs offer financial help with copayments, co-insurance, and insurance deductibles for prescription drugs, equipment, and supplies. People qualify for these programs by proving they cannot afford their medicine or other healthcare costs. How you qualify for help varies with each program. Search online for "copay assistance" or "prescription assistance" to find help. One note: Some insurance companies use copay accumulator programs, which stop copay assistance coupons from counting toward deductibles and maximum out-of-pocket spending.

Medicaid: Medicaid is a joint federal and state health coverage program for low-income adults, children, pregnant women, older

Medicare and Second Opinions

A second opinion is when you ask a doctor other than your regular doctor for their view on symptoms, an injury, or an illness you are experiencing in order to better help you make an informed decision about treatment options.

Medicare covers second opinions if a doctor recommends that you have surgery or a major diagnostic or therapeutic procedure. Medicare does not cover second opinions for excluded services.

Medicare will also cover a third opinion if the first and second opinions are different from each other. The second and third opinions will be covered even if Medicare will not ultimately cover your procedure.

If the first and second opinions were the same but you want a third opinion, you may be able to see a third doctor for a confirmatory consultation. Medicare may cover a confirmatory consultation if your doctor submits the claim correctly and the services are reasonable and necessary (even if Medicare will not ultimately cover them).

If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan, it may have different cost and coverage rules for second and third opinions. Contact your plan for more information.

Source: [Medicare Interactive](#)

Healthcare Expenses, con't

adults, and people with disabilities. Some states have additional options for coverage. To find out if you qualify for Medicaid, contact your state Medicaid agency or fill out an application through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Learn more at [Medicaid.gov](https://www.medicaid.gov) or [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

Community Health Centers:

These clinics offer low- or no-cost healthcare services and referrals to specialized care. Search online for the center nearest you or go to [Findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov).

Veterans Affairs (VA):

The VA offers healthcare for U.S. military veterans and people on active duty. Family members may also qualify for healthcare through the VA. You may apply online, in person at the nearest VA medical center or clinic, by phone, or by mail. Learn more at [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov).

More tips for lowering costs

Here are some extra tips for lowering your healthcare costs:

Nonprofit groups: National and local charities can help to save money on prescription drugs and healthcare services.¹⁰

Drugs samples: Some doctors give out free samples of brand-name drugs to help ease costs. Samples also allow you to check out a drug's side effects and how well it works before buying it. Plus, they act as a stop-gap until you can sign up for a patient assistance program (PAP).

Generic medicines: Ask your doctor or pharmacist if your medicine is available in a generic form or under a less expensive brand name. Mail-order pharmacies are another option to lower drug costs.

Price-shopping: Check with different pharmacies in your area for the best price on prescription drugs.

Referrals: Your doctor can also refer you to state-sponsored services and community assistance programs.

Drugmakers: Drug companies offer 2 types of help. They have programs that allow you to use a discount drug card at the pharmacy. There are also PAPs, which offer free or low-cost medicines to people who cannot afford them.

Clinical trials: Clinical research is a way to get medical care and access a new treatment before it is widely available. Keep in mind that the trial's sponsor covers costs related to taking part in the clinical trial. However, you or your insurance company will pay for care costs such as hospital stays, lab tests, and doctor visits.

To learn more about coverage options and your rights as a healthcare consumer, visit the [CoverageRights.org](https://www.coveragerights.org) and [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) websites.

Source: [BladderCancer.net](https://www.bladdercancer.net)

Homebound COVID Vaccination Services Available

The On-Site Medical Services Homebound Call Center is now accepting calls for homebound vaccination services.

Phone: The direct number for the Call Center is (603) 338-9292. Hours are M-F, 9:00am–5:00pm. There is voicemail for anyone calling outside those hours.

Email: Requests can be made by emailing vaccinations@onsitemedservices.com.

Online: Individuals can request homebound vaccination services using an online form found at <https://www.onstitenh.com/vaccine>.

How to Replace a Lost or Misplaced Vaccination Card

Have you lost or misplaced your COVID-19 vaccination card?

Request a new card by emailing covidvaccinescheduling@dhhs.nh.gov. Include your name, phone number, address and date of birth.

Or, you can go to [vaccines.nh.gov](https://www.vaccines.nh.gov) and select, "download a copy of your COVID-19 vaccine record" and follow the instructions.

Please note that this record may not contain information on any booster shot you've received at a pharmacy.

Holiday Food on A Budget

Take a moment to reflect on the meaning of the holiday.

Chances are that spending time with family and friends is more important than how fancy or expensive a holiday meal is.

Cooking for family and friends during the holidays doesn't have to be stressful or expensive. Here are some suggestions to cook up your best holiday meals yet.

Plan your meals to minimize stress

Plan your meals with the time required to prep and cook in mind. If you hope to spend time with your loved ones on the day of the event, you won't want to be stuck in the kitchen all day.

- Plan for dishes that you can make ahead of time, and refrigerate or freeze for later use.
- Prepare something in a crockpot, which will allow you to make it in the morning (or evening) and not require any additional prep until it is time to serve.
- If you are making one time-consuming menu item, plan for other easy-to-prepare items to round out the meal.
- Consider turning one or more of your meals into a potluck. Each person (or family) can bring a dish they enjoy, you save time (and money) in the kitchen and everyone is happy in the end.
- If everyone you are spending time with lives relatively close to each other, consider a progressive meal. As a group, you can travel to each person or family's home to share a dish, which saves on any one person needing to prepare and cook an entire meal. For example, you could have an appetizer at one family's home, a casserole at the next family's home and a dessert at the third family's home. This can also add variety and a sense of fun to a meal!
- Consider turning some traditions upside down, and host a gathering for family and friends that isn't focused around you preparing a full meal. For example, host a card writing, cookie making, present wrapping, or sledding party and provide cookies and hot chocolate. You'll still get to enjoy time with loved ones while saving the stress (and dollars) it takes to prepare a full meal.

Plan your meals to stay within your budget

Follow these tips to help keep any meals or dishes you prepare within your budget.

1. Look in your cupboards, pantry, refrigerator and freezer for food that you already have. A holiday meal might be a nice opportunity to use up that frozen appetizer you've been saving for "a special occasion" or the bag of dried cranberries you haven't known what to do with. Still have a

Stay Mindful of Food-Related Illnesses

Nothing can dampen your holiday like a bout of food poisoning or a food-related allergic reaction. Keep your family safe and healthy during the holiday season by following these safety tips.

- Wash your hands often, and make sure your children do the same!
- Always prepare food in a clean, and sanitized kitchen.
- Ask your guests about their food allergies before you plan your meal, and stay mindful at the store and in the kitchen about these allergies.
- Always thaw frozen food in refrigerator, never at room temperature. Place raw meat, poultry, and fish below ready-to-eat foods, and in a container to catch drippings.
- Separate raw meat from ready-to-eat foods during storage and preparation. Do not use the same cutting boards or knives unless they have been washed and sanitized.
- Heat foods to proper temperature when cooking.
- Cool leftovers within 2 hours.

We welcome all points of view and invite your submissions. To send articles or to add your name to our mailing list, contact: NHCOAnews@gmail.com

Holiday Meals, con't

- surplus of apples or squash from the farmers market? Your holiday meal can feature these items.
2. Take a look at the advertised sales at your grocery store. If you discover there's a good deal on a particular product that week, you might want to incorporate it into one of your meals.
 3. Write down your proposed menu for the holiday meals, keeping in mind what you already have on hand and what is on sale. If you're planning to prepare one more costly dish, round out the meal with less costly dishes.
 4. Write down a list of everything else you need to purchase for the meal.
 5. Search the internet for coupons or clip coupons for items on your list.
 6. Go to the grocery store when you are not hungry to keep your spontaneous purchase to a minimum. Stay away from pre-made and pre-processed foods as they are typically much more expensive.

Maximize those leftovers!

If you end up preparing a big meal for your loved ones, chances are that you'll have leftover food. Don't underestimate the power of leftovers to help save you stress and money this holiday season! Most people agree that turkey dinner leftovers is just as good the second or third day. Most guests will be appreciative that you are feeding them, and will not criticize you for serving them leftovers — especially if they were present for the original meal.

To use your leftovers "as is," follow these tips.

- Remove any meat from the carcass or bone, cutting it into small pieces and storing it in shallow containers in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Use all leftovers within 4 days or freeze for later use.
- Reheat leftovers to 165° F, or until hot and steaming.

Source: University of Minnesota Extension

Turn leftovers into a low-cost meal

Soup: Add 2 cups of chopped meat, 4 cups of chopped vegetables and 2 cups cooked rice or wild rice to 3 cans low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth. Simmer until veggies are done to your liking and flavors have blended. Add parsley, bay leaves or garlic for extra flavor.

Salads: Add leftover meat or roasted vegetables to any green salad. Try almonds and dried cranberries for a great taste. Add cooked meat to a pasta or wild rice salad with chopped broccoli, peppers, onions, carrots and celery.

Sandwiches: Allow guests to create their own sandwich creations, layering leftover meat and veggies in a sandwich, with additional sandwich toppings like lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, peppers, shredded carrots, and/or apple slices. Instead of bread, try a whole wheat pita or tortilla.

Skillet meals: Add 1 or 2 cups of chopped leftover meat to sautéed onion, mushrooms and broccoli. Add cooked rice or pasta. Sprinkle with shredded parmesan cheese before serving.

Breakfast dishes: Add leftover meat and/or vegetables to scrambled eggs, quiche, or omelets. For a fun twist on a classic, serve this dish for dinner.



The advertisement features a blue header with a shield logo containing a cross and a caduceus. Below the logo, the text reads "medicare enrollment is NOW OPEN". Underneath this, it says "deadline to apply is DECEMBER 7TH". A red footer bar contains the text "Find the plan that's best for you at www.medicare.gov".

SCAM of the Month Alert

Attorney General John M. Formella issued a Consumer Alert warning New Hampshire residents about a recent report of scammers sending a fraudulent letter purporting to be from the NH Attorney General's Office to a New Hampshire resident.

Sent on the Attorney General's Office official letterhead and falsely purporting to be signed by NH's Deputy Attorney General, it falsely claims that the recipient's identity has been used in connection with a purchase through an online retailer. The letter falsely claims that the AG's Office is investigating the "unsanctioned transaction" and seeks the resident's cooperation. It warns that any of the resident's accounts (financial and non-financial) linked with the resident's social security number will be shut down. The letter also provides contact information that is not legitimately associated with the Attorney General's Office or with any other law enforcement agency.

The resident, believing the letter to be legitimate, called the telephone number listed in the letter. The resident was then asked to purchase gift cards from a local retailer and to send photos by telephone of the gift card numbers. In addition, the resident was asked to send cash through the mail and to provide personal identifying information, including the resident's social security number.

The following are tips to avoid falling victim to this scam:

- Know that the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office will never send correspondence to identify fraud victims (or any other crime victims) threatening to shut down the victim's accounts;
- Know that no law enforcement agency, including the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, will demand that you purchase and send gift cards or gift card information, or cash related to a matter;
- Be wary of any unexpected correspondence purporting to be from a law enforcement agency, including the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, seeking personal identifying information, including your social security number;
- Always verify contact information provided in correspondence purporting to be sent from a law enforcement agency, including the Attorney General's Office, through a known and trusted source, such as an official government website. The Attorney General's Office official contact information can be found at www.doj.nh.gov.

How to Spot Misinformation Online

A free short course from MediaWise for Seniors will teach you how to tell what's true and false on the internet. By looking at examples of political, health, travel and climate misinformation, learn techniques for identifying false information and how to seek out trustworthy sources.

Christiane Amanpour, Joan Lunden, Lester Holt, Hari Sreenivasan and Dave Jorgenson—MediaWise Ambassadors—will also pop in to share their advice as experienced journalists to help you navigate information on platforms like Google, Facebook and more.

To enroll in the course, log in using the link highlight in red below to get started. Once enrolled, keep scrolling to see the course content. This self-directed course takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete.

How to Spot Misinformation Online

Help Us Spread the Word!

If you like this newsletter, please share it with your family, neighbors, friends, and colleagues.

Have the newsletter delivered right to your inbox each month.

Follow this link to sign up on the NH Commission on Aging webpage:

<https://nhcoa.nh.gov/>

How Men Adapt to Being Solo Agers

3 steps men can take to stay connected, be prepared and fight loneliness

By Jackson Rainer

I am euphemistically known as a “solo ager,” a 66-year-old child-free widower with no plans to seek another primary intimate monogamous relationship. I must admit that the term “solo ager” is preferable to the horrible designation made by other social scientists who refer to me as an “elder orphan.” That phrase reeks of an aging Oliver Twist, developmentally frozen in the pain of abandonment and fear.

I am certainly not orphaned. I am well loved by others, continue to be involved as a psychologist in meaningful professional work and live independently. I feel vital in my activities of daily living and am as busy as I want. That said, it is a truth that I am existentially and observably alone as I live into this stage of life. This alone-ness carries unique risks for those in my cohort.

It's Challenging for Men to Be Vulnerable

A good deal of consideration is currently being given to solo aging. Themes abound for connecting to others and making personal wishes, including legal and financial directives, formal and concrete. While good advice, much of it tends to go in one eye and out the other as I, and many men of my generation, view such guidelines through a traditional male lens.

Challenges, con't next page

3 Steps for Successful Solo Aging

1. While You Are Healthy, Make Plans.

Complete advance directives and designate a trusted health care proxy. Spell out personal wishes regarding medical treatment. Grant someone the power of attorney to handle legal and financial matters should the need arise. Inform those close to you about your designate to ensure as little misunderstanding as possible in the event of a crisis or emergency.

Talk to an elder care financial planner. A 2020 study from Northwestern Mutual reports that “Overall, single men and women are generally less satisfied with their financial circumstances than married Americans. More than four in ten single men and half of single women say they feel either a moderate or a high level of anxiety about their personal financial security.”

Rely on the professional to assist in formulating a reasonable plan for managing money and financial resources, including considerations for long-term care, however that might emerge.

2. Go Toward Others.

Social science tells us there is great benefit in being social as we age. The impact of social distancing during the pandemic will be studied for years to come. Already, there is sound determination that the loss of broad interpersonal communities has undermined our collective sense of security and anchoring to day-to-day living.

The psychologist John Cacioppo, in his 2009 book “Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection,” reports that loneliness may have twice the impact on early death as obesity and is as damaging as disadvantaged socioeconomic status.

We men are notorious for waiting for others to contact and recruit us into social activities. Such a stance never works.

Perhaps that statement is unclear and bears repetition: Waiting for others never, never, never works.

When lonesome, sitting and waiting for others’ invitations breeds disappointment, isolation, cynicism and contempt. Social connection requires reaching out and intentionally moving toward desirable activities and people. When activities are fun and meaningful, most in the gathered group will be equally engaged, making for easier collegiality and companionship.

Steps, con't next page

Solo Aging, con't

Most of us are feeling lonelier and more isolated than we care to admit.

Men of my ilk were taught from an early age never to admit vulnerability or to ask for help. So, we don't.

We were taught to figure out problems independently or be humiliated:

Am I sick? "If I'm not feeling better tomorrow, I'll go to urgent care."

Am I lost? "I can't be far from where I'm going. I don't need the GPS. Let me try this turn."

Do I need help carrying my groceries to the car? "It's just a sprained ankle. I can get this."

Am I lonesome? "I'm fine. I'm fine."

As men, we would rather stand naked in rush hour traffic than risk the exposure of not knowing, or worse, being seen as weak and culpable for perceived fragility.

This type of traditional masculine maneuvering is potentially dangerous territory, particularly on the heels of the pandemic.

Most of us are feeling lonelier and more isolated than we are willing to admit. Our support systems have been disrupted, our health challenged and any sense of a normative rhythm upended in ways unknown during our lifetimes.

Fortunately, there are social science directives, translated here in masculine frames of reference, that may be helpful to mitigate the challenges of going it alone.

Steps, con't

Perhaps that statement is unclear and bears repetition: Waiting for others never, never, never works.

A male solo ager is entirely responsible for his social life. Guys must be friendly to have friends. This truth is easier for those, like me, who are extroverts. For those who are introverts, think carefully about living choices. Living alone in a family home may require an increased amount of solitary upkeep.

If there are adult children, remember they have their own urgent lives and may not be able to attend to elders with the frequency or intensity that a solo aging parent expects.

There are contemporary options for living at this stage of life, including 55-plus or retirement communities, walkable communities if driving is a challenge and village-to-village networks , which are grassroots organizations formed through a cadre of caring neighbors who want to change the paradigm of aging. Local villages connect members to a full range of practical support services to help with non-medical household tasks, services, programs, and transportation.

3. Get Busy. Stay Physically Active.

A major contributor to isolation and adverse aging is found in the loss of a schedule. Particularly for men, we rely on the identity that work provides. Typically, we are known for what we do. Our work identity provides meaning and accountability.

After retirement, there are new personal definitions to enhance our sense of self as we age. We shift into being known for who we are. This "hard right turn" from what we do to who we are is enhanced by routine rhythms of planned activities which contribute to ordinary vitality. Add regular physical activity and stay in motion. Research confirms that when physical exercise and social activities are combined, overall psychological health is amplified.

Looking ahead, allowing room for help, and seeking the companionship of others are keys to going it alone with integrity. Does it solve all the loneliness encountered as a solo ager? Certainly not, but it does keep us in charge of what is manageable as we grow older.

Jackson Rainer is a board-certified clinical psychologist.

Source: [Next Avenue](#).

Your Local Resources

- ServiceLink Aging & Disability Resource Center: (866) 634-9412, servicelink.nh.gov
- 2-1-1 NH is the connection for NH residents to the most up-to-date resources they need from specially trained Information and Referral Specialists. 211 NH is available 24 hours, 365 days a year. Multilingual assistance and TDD access are also available, <https://www.211nh.org>

Help us find a name for the newsletter!

How would you like to go down in history as the person who named the NH State Commission on Aging newsletter? Well, here's your chance. We're looking for a name for our newsletter and we need your help. Aside from guaranteed fame, you'll be rewarded with an awesome prize!

We'd like a name that reflects all the diverse, engaged and interesting older adults who live in the Granite State. Come up with your own unique idea and email it to Rebecca Sky, NH Commission on Aging Executive Director, at rebecca.l.sky@nhcoa.nh.gov. Entries can also be mailed to Rebecca at NH Commission on Aging, 117 Pleasant St., Dolloff Building, 4th Floor, Concord, NH 03301.

Everyone who submits a name will be entered into a drawing to receive age friendly birthday cards (see sample). Members of the newsletter Advisory Board will select the newsletter's name after the deadline and the new name will be announced in the January 2022 edition.

**Deadline for submitting entries is
Wednesday, December 15, 2021**

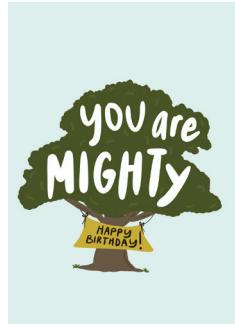
Name Our Newsletter Contest Rules: You may submit as many newsletter name entries as you wish. We are looking for a short, catchy name for the newsletter, which should not be registered or be a trademark or brand for any other person or entity or be the name of any other business or company.

Medicare & Ambulance Coverage

Medicare covers ground and air ambulance transportation when all of these criteria are met:

- The transportation is medically necessary
- Any other means of transportation is contraindicated
- The destination is to the nearest appropriate facility that can treat the beneficiary's condition

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LIKE AN OAK!
WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST IN
THE YEAR AHEAD!

AARP and Lowe's Team Up to Improve Aging-in-Place Options

by Michelle R. Davis, AARP

A new collaboration between AARP and home improvement chain Lowe's will provide strategies and information to help make living spaces more accessible for everyone and allow older adults to stay in their homes safely and comfortably as they age.

The two-year collaboration offers information and guidance around home improvement and design techniques to support older adults and family caregivers as they reimagine their homes for the next stage of life. Seventy-seven percent of people 50 and older want to remain in their current homes as they age, according to an AARP survey, but the majority of homes do not have the features needed to support that option.

Through this online and in-store collaboration, AARP will provide the **Lowe's Livable Home** initiative helpful tips and how-to information and provides solutions and inspiration through a library of articles and videos featuring ideas around smart home technology, lighting, kitchen and bath design, and topics such as caregiving, preventing falls and promoting independence.

Build Back Better Act Passes House

by Howard Bedlin, Government Relations & Advocacy Principal at National Council on Aging

The House passed the Build Back Better Act on November 19 after receiving Congressional Budget Office estimates of the bill's spending and savings levels.

As expected, negotiators made several changes to reduce the bill's total price tag from \$3.5 trillion to \$1.75 trillion over 10 years. As planned, the investments are offset by increased revenues and reduced federal spending in other areas.

Thanks to advocates who contacted their members of Congress in recent weeks, many of the investments that benefit older adults and caregivers were retained, including:

- Older Americans Act funding, including for the Senior Community Service Employment Program; the Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation Center; Supportive Services, with language specifically encouraging infrastructure investments in senior center modernization and construction; Nutrition Programs; the National Family Caregiver Support Program; and more.
- Elder Justice Act reauthorization to support adult protective services and the long-term care ombudsman program.

What changed in the Build Back Better Act?

Some of the most significant changes in the House legislation relate to the Medicare and Medicaid proposals.

Medicare

Still in the bill are reforms to make Medicare prescription drugs more affordable and expand Medicare coverage for hearing aids and audiology services. The prescription drug provisions are not as ambitious as some had hoped, but the bill keeps the \$2,000 cap on out-of-pocket spending, as well as Health & Human Services Secretary negotiations on a more narrow range of drugs.

Removed from the bill are provisions to cover dental and vision services. NCOA and other Medicare advocacy groups continue to work with Senate leaders to pursue further reductions to prescription drug costs and some form of dental benefits.

Medicaid

Still in the bill is an historic investment in home and community-based services (HCBS), although total spending was reduced from \$190 billion to \$150 billion. This should be enough to permanently increase the federal contribution to states for these services by about 6% and enable states to increase wages and benefits for home care workers. Also included are provisions to make permanent the Money Follows the Person Program and HCBS spousal impoverishment protections. Paid family and medical leave are included, as well, but are scaled back from 12 to 4 weeks.

Removed from the bill is a proposal to expand access to retirement security, including requiring employers without employer-sponsored retirement plans to automatically enroll their employees in IRAs or 401(k)-type plans.

What's next for the Build Back Better Act?

The legislation will now move to the Senate, where additional changes are expected. NCOA will advocate that our priorities remain in the bill and for continued prescription drug and dental care improvements.

Please stay tuned in case your voice is needed once again to urge your Senators to pass the best legislation possible for older adults.

Source: NCOA.org

Happy Holidays
From Our Families to Yours

House Passes Sweeping Infrastructure Bill That Will Benefit Older Americans

Safer streets and improved broadband internet would help people stay connected

by Kenneth Terrell, AARP

A bill that upgrades the nation's infrastructure, including improved public transportation and increased access to broadband internet, passed the U.S. House of Representatives on November 5. The legislation will help many older Americans stay better connected to their communities, both in person and online.

Because the U.S. Senate passed the legislation with a strong 69-30 bipartisan vote in August, the bill—known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act—went straight to President Joe Biden who signed it on November 15. The House approved the bill by a vote of 228-206.

This measure is one of two major pieces of legislation being pushed by the Biden administration. The other—the Build Back Better bill—was passed by the House on Friday, November 19. It now goes to the Senate.

"With today's infrastructure vote, historic investments will be made in digital equity and increased support for the Emergency Broadband Benefit," says Nancy LeaMond, AARP executive vice president and chief advocacy and engagement officer. "Millions more Americans will now have access to high-speed internet, including those with limited means, those who face barriers due to language or ability, and those who live in unserved and underserved areas. Internet accessibility is essential for older adults to stay connected with their families, communities, commerce and services."

Here are five ways the infrastructure bill will directly benefit older Americans.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit would continue. The bill contains roughly \$65 billion to improve access to high-quality, high-speed internet nationwide. The stimulus bill enacted this year created a federal benefit to help people from lower-income households pay for high-speed internet connections. More than 7 million families—40 percent of which include someone who is age 50 and older—took advantage of that provision. The infrastructure bill will make that benefit permanent, renaming it the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Broadband reaches new populations. The infrastructure bill also invests in the expansion of high-speed internet to areas in

Infrastructure, con't next page

ACA Open Enrollment Runs Until Jan. 15, 2022

If you or members of your household don't have health insurance coverage and are not eligible for Medicaid or Medicare, you may qualify for health insurance through NH's Health Insurance Marketplace.

The Open Enrollment Period for Granite Staters newly-purchasing or changing their Affordable Care Act individual health coverage for 2022 runs through January 15, 2022. The deadline to sign up coverage to begin on January 1, 2022 is December 15, 2021.

This year, NH will have two Navigator grantees, First Choice Services and Health Market Connect, with an aim to increase access to health insurance and reduce barriers to obtaining an affordable health insurance plan. Navigators are trained to provide unbiased Marketplace health insurance assistance.

First Choice Services can be contacted at (877) 211-NAVI or (603) 931-3858. **Health Market Connect** can be contacted at (800) 208-5164 or (603) 309-2021.

Three insurance companies will offer ACA-compliant individual plans on the NH Marketplace: Anthem, Ambetter from NH Healthy Families and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care.

Visit www.healthcare.gov for more information.

Contact the NH Insurance Department if you have questions or concerns about Marketplace plans. (800) 852-3416 or email consumerservices@ins.nh.gov

Infrastructure, con't

need—particularly unserved and underserved areas—as well as provide training for those who need it. These provisions—when added to the subsidy program—will put high-speed internet service within reach of more people.

Roads and highways become safer. The new Safe Streets for All program—and other programs to enhance safety funded in the infrastructure bill—will provide resources to make the nation's roads and highways safer for all users. According to the National Safety Council, approximately 22 percent of the people who died in motor vehicle crashes in 2019 were age 45 or older.

Public transportation becomes more accessible. The legislation will deliver approximately \$39 billion to expand and upgrade public transit services nationwide, including efforts to make these services more accessible for older riders and people with disabilities. The money will be used to modernize buses, trains and transit stations, extend service and reduce costs for users. Together, it represents the largest investment the federal government has ever made in local public transportation.

Many older adults will benefit from these improvements to public transportation, particularly the near 20 percent of people 65 and older who do not drive, and the 35 percent of women over 75 who don't drive at all.

More choice in how to get around. The legislation will support local and state efforts to offer more choice in how people get around no matter where they live, by increasing funding for investments for options like walking and bicycling. It also makes it easier for rural areas and low-income communities to get the funds they need to create safer roads.

"Older adults want to continue to live in their communities as they age, yet they too frequently lack convenient, safe and accessible transportation options when they no longer are able to drive or choose not to drive," LeaMond says.

Kenneth Terrell covers employment, age discrimination, work and jobs, careers, and the federal government for AARP.

Contact Information for NH Members of the U.S. Congress

U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas
323 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5456
<https://pappas.house.gov/>

U.S. Rep Ann Kuster
137 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5206
<https://kuster.house.gov/contact/>

U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan
B85 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3324
<https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator>

U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen
506 Hart SOB
Washington, DC 20510
www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne

Consumer Guide to Assisted Living Facilities Available from NHLA Justice in Aging Project

The Justice in Aging Project at New Hampshire Legal Assistance has written a new guide to help consumers learn about assisted living facilities in New Hampshire.

Highlights include a checklist for evaluating and comparing facilities and an overview of residents' rights and responsibilities, as well as frequently asked questions about assisted living facilities and a list of helpful resources.

The **Consumer Guide** is the first product of the NHLA Justice in Aging Project, formerly the Senior Law Project. The project changed its name to reframe conversations about aging and discourage ageist thinking.

Use Your Voice to Advocate with the New Hampshire Legislature

The New Hampshire Legislature

The NH legislature is made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate. This is called the NH General Court. There are 400 State Representatives and 24 Senators. Legislators are elected and serve for two year terms. The legislature meets in session from January to June every year. Both House members and Senators are paid \$100/yr. plus mileage, so this is a volunteer position that is held by everyday people. Each House member represents about 3,400 people.

What is Advocacy and why does it matter?

Your advocacy is very important to help Legislators understand the impact of policy on older adults. Advocacy can include:

- Building relationships with lawmakers, the governor's office, and state department staff
- Educating legislators-provide information on an issue or impact of a bill
- Educating the public-write a letter to the editor, talk to your friends and neighbors about the issue, introduce your friends to the legislators that represent them
- Research-provide data and stories about the issue to dispel myths and provide the real situation
- Attending a rally-this is a form of mobilizing folks to show how important an issue is
- Training -learning about successful strategies and skills for taking action

How a Bill Becomes Law

Every bill begins with a **legislative service request** (LSR) files by a House or Senate member in the fall prior to the legislative session. If the sponsor is a representative, the bill starts in the House and becomes a House bill (HB). If the sponsor is a senator, the bill starts in the Senate and becomes a Senate Bill (SB). The bill will be given a number and referred to as "HB/SB #" and then assigned to a committee based on its topic. A list of the committees in the House and Senate can be found on the [General Court website](#).

The committee holds a **public hearing** for every bill. This is your opportunity to speak to all members of the committee. The committee will deliberate in an executive session that the public may observe then votes on a recommendation to make to the full body (House or Senate). They may recommend:

FIND HELP!

Do you need help with your Social Security or VA benefits? Do you have questions about the IRS or Medicare? If so, your NH Congressional Delegation can help!

Each member's office have staff equipped to help New Hampshire residents with issues, concerns or questions related to the federal government.

Reach Out When You Need Assistance!

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

2 Wall St., Suite 220
Manchester, NH 03101
(603) 647-7500

www.shaheen.senate.gov

Senator Maggie Hassan

1589 Elm St., 3rd Floor
Manchester, NH 03101
(603) 622-2204

www.hassan.senate.gov

Rep. Chris Pappas

1st Congressional District
660 Central Ave., Unit 101
Dover, NH 03820
(603) 285-4300

<https://pappas.house.gov/>

Rep. Annie Kuster

2nd Congressional District
18 North Main St., 4th Floor
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 226-1002

<https://kuster.house.gov/>

Who is My Legislator?

Use this link to find and contact your local State Representative and Senator: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

Visit your town or city's website to find contact information for your local elected officials.

NH Policy Update, con't

- *Ought to Pass (OTP)*: the bill should pass.
- *Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL)*: the bill should not pass.
- *Ought to Pass as Amended (OTP-A)*: the bill should pass with an amendment added by the committee.
- *Re-refer to Committee*: the bill should be studied further in committee during the next legislative session. Only occurs during the first year of the biennium.
- *Refer to Interim Study*: the bill should be studied further between legislative sessions. If this occurs in the second year of the biennium, the bill dies.

Sometimes a bill is sent to a second committee. This often happens if the bill has a fiscal note (FN), meaning there is a financial component to the bill.

The bill then goes to the full House or Senate for a vote. If the bill passes, it is sent to the other legislative body and the same process repeats. This occurs during late March and early April and is called **Crossover**.

The process repeats with bills that have survived the crossover and the bill is assigned to a committee, a **public hearing** is held, the committee votes on a recommendation, and the bill is voted on by the full legislative body. If the bill passes, but includes an amendment approved by the second legislative body that was not approved by the first legislative body, then the first body (House or Senate) can approve (concur) the amendment or if they don't approve (nonconcur) and the bill goes to a Committee of Conference to work out the differences. If legislators cannot agree, the bill dies.

If the bill passes both legislative bodies, it goes to the Governor. The governor will either sign the bill into law, allow the bill to become law without a signature, or veto the bill. If vetoed, the veto may be overridden by a 2/3 majority vote in both houses. If an override occurs, the bill becomes law.

Get involved! Use your voice to advocate!

Testify Before a Committee: The public hearing is your opportunity to have direct input on the future of a bill by providing testimony.

Contact Legislators: Make a phone call, send an email, meet in person. Contact information on legislators can be found on the General Court website <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>

Use the Media: Write a Letter to the Editor (LTE) and use your social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook) to inform legislators and the public about the issue.

Join the NH AHA Advocacy Work Group at our Monthly Meeting and get involved!

You can follow the NH AHA Advocacy efforts and get involved by following our work through the weekly email. Click on this link to join the email list: https://secure.everyaction.com/_Fap3zmlwkuCjhV-mc5YcQ2

You're Invited To Share Your Thoughts & Ideas

New Hampshire's older adults have a story to tell. We welcome the opportunity this newsletter gives you to share your story with others in hopes that your experiences will help, inspire and encourage someone else as we all look for answers and ideas on how to navigate the years ahead.

Please use this newsletter as your way to share those personal experiences and your personal points of view on living in New Hampshire as an older adult.

We hope that in sharing a variety of different points of view, we are able to assist you in forming your own opinions.

There are two ways to send articles —or to add your name to our newsletter mailing list.

1. Email it to:
NHCOAnews@gmail.com

2. Mail it to: NHCOA Newsletter, NH Commission on Aging, 117 Pleasant St., Dolloff Building, 4th Floor, Concord, NH 03301

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

**NHCOAnews@
gmail.com**

Older Adult Volunteers Recognized for Service to New Hampshire Communities

The New Hampshire State Commission on Aging, along with Governor Chris Sununu, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and EngAGING NH announced this year's recipients of the Older Adult Volunteer Awards presented during a virtual ceremony on May 18, 2021.

These awards have been bestowed each year since 1962 during the month of May, coinciding with the nationally celebrated Older Americans Month.

The awards honor individuals or couples age 60 or older who have shown outstanding leadership or achievement as a volunteer serving to build strong communities in each of New Hampshire's 10 counties.

"Civic minded residents like these award winners who are willing to dig into the weeds and serve their communities are the heroes who make our communities the thriving, welcoming places we want them to be," Rebecca Sky, Executive Director of the State Commission on Aging said. "They remind us of the difference any one of us can make at any age. This has been a challenging year that has adversely effected so many. I and all of us on the Commission on Aging are grateful for the opportunity to be able to celebrate older adults in our communities."

Older Americans Month seeks to recognize the contributions of older adults across the nation. This year's theme, "Communities of Strength", acknowledges that Older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and difficulties and have much to offer our communities.



A Citizen Voice for the Aging Experience



2021 Honorees

Mary Strong, Belknap County



An avid member of the Alton Senior Center, Mary is beloved not only by staff and volunteers but by her fellow patrons of the center. Mary is the "go to" person for getting things done. She is the raffle-person, she helps in the kitchen; she is good with crafts and gets others involved. She volunteers almost every day and is always seeking ways to get a new group together. For Mary, it's all about building community and engaging others.

Chele Miller, Carroll County



It all started with elastic that was needed by volunteers who were fabricating masks for caregivers and home-bound individuals. When someone ran out of elastic one day, Chele Miller became the Mask Maiden. Within one week, she was the courier and coordinator of the entire operation. She orchestrated for the operation to also benefit the Farmers Market of Tamworth and by turning it into a fundraiser, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Tamworth Community Nurse Association. She was the glue that held it all together.

Barbara Rockwell, Cheshire County

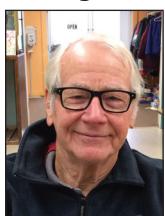


This past year, Barbara saw a need and filled it by securing space at the Stoddard firehouse and organizing volunteers for a food pantry from 9 to 12 every Saturday to make food boxes available for pickup or delivery. On most Saturdays at least 25 boxes are distributed. Barbara also initiated and organized the Friendly Meals Grab & Go program for anyone over 60 years of age. All a person needs to do to arrange a weekly delivery of five meals is to call Barbara. Barbara's dedication to her town of Stoddard is a role model for others.

2021 Honorees, con't next page

George Sanschagrin, Coos County

George is a full-time volunteer with an admirable spirit, dedication, and positive attitude when it comes to volunteering. The Coos County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and the Senior Meals/Senior Center of Coos County appreciate his full-time volunteer activities whether it be in the Senior Meals kitchen or unloading Food Bank deliveries or working as Mr. Fix-it in their various offices. During his more than 2,000 hours of volunteer service George has also helped the City of Berlin and the local American Red Cross among others.

Larry Steigleman, Grafton County

Even though the Littleton Area Senior Center was shut down to all indoor visitors and volunteers, Larry stepped forward assisting with the Foodbank delivery at the nearby drop site to bring it to the Center. Each month Larry borrowed a vehicle from nearby car dealerships, loaded the delivery, and helped unload it. When 100 more boxes were added to a regular delivery, Larry simply arranged to borrow a bigger truck and made additional trips. When Grab & Go weekly lunches began, requiring outdoor tent and table set up and distribution of food, Larry jumped in with tireless energy. He is a quiet, continual presence with an uncanny ability to predict when his community might need help.

Beverly Cotton, Hillsborough County

Beverly Cotton was nominated by AARP to recognize her volunteer work in Hillsborough county and statewide. She is an impactful and enthusiastic volunteer voice for AARP's more than 215,000 members. Bev has said of her volunteer work: "Through this work, I am able to feel that sense of fulfillment and accomplishment that is very much like what I got from my work before retirement. It has filled that void and it has also brought me a large group of wonderful new people in my life that I have come to call friends."

Yvonne La Garde, Hillsborough County

Yvonne La Garde always goes above and beyond in her service supporting older adults. She is the current chair of the Pelham NH Council on Aging, growing its membership and expanding its sponsorship even during the pandemic. At the local senior center her push to think outside the box transformed programming to continue during the pandemic. She has led many programs herself. And she has gotten involved in town planning, working to secure support and funding for efforts based on surveys of older adults she help orchestrate.

**Kathy Conk-Ryder, Merrimack County**

Part of ServiceLink's mission is to empower individuals to age in the place of their choosing. Kathy is an integral part of that mission. In 2020 Kathy logged over 350 hours and 198 separate contacts with consumers, all of which were Medicare related. She trained to become an instructor and has made an everlasting difference by going the extra mile for those she helps. She has become the trusted face of ServiceLink and Medicare. She has also become our conduit to the New Hampshire Insurance Department and suggested some consumer-friendly improvements that would be helpful. She is motivational and inspirational to those around her.

**Claire Ruocco, Rockingham County**

Energetic Claire Ruocco has been a stellar and dedicated volunteer with Society of St. Vincent de Paul Exeter Food Pantry and Cleo Castonguay Community Assistance Center since 2011. Claire is a co-chair of our Senior Delivery program as well as (pre-pandemic) our exclusive Senior Food Pantry. Volunteering 20-25 hours each week, Claire serves as an inspiration to our staff and our 130 volunteers alike, making clients feel respected and welcomed. She has led numerous fundraising events and organized food drives.

Norm Sanborn, Strafford County

Norm, a World War II Navy Veteran, is an extremely active volunteer who genuinely cares for fellow veterans and civilians. For many years he served as President of the Veterans Council of Rochester arranging many social, educational and other offerings. His 92 years have not reduced his energy, involvement, and commitment even during the Pandemic. Norm assisted the NH Veterans Home in ensuring adequate supplies of personal protective equipment by arranging a grant donation from the Rochester Elks Lodge for COVID-19.

Linda Smith, Sullivan County

Who walks two miles at 5:30 in the morning, five days a week, rain or shine, daylight or dark, in hot or freezing weather to do her volunteer work for a minimum of 35 hours per week? Who does that? Linda Smith does to get to the Newport Senior Center where she works in the kitchen doing many things. Beyond her 35 hours per week with food preparation, Linda will often extend her hours to help clean and set up and organize space for exercise programs, fundraisers, health clinics, and other activities that promote socialization and independence for older adults.

Nominations Now Open for 2022 Recognition Program

The nomination period is now open for the NH State Commission on Aging and EngAGING NH annual "Older Adult Volunteer" awards!

Nomination submission will be accepted up until Friday, March 4, 2022.

The recognition program's goal is to celebrate and recognize individuals or couples over the age of 60 who are volunteering in ways that serve to build strong communities. Through engaging ourselves and others we weave connections that contribute to and strengthen our communities.

Celebrating the contributions of people demonstrates the difference any one of us can make at any point in our lives on the lives of others. This year more than ever, we need to celebrate each other. Please take the time to make a nomination!

It's been another challenging year. Please use this opportunity to contribute to a celebration of people in our community who helped us to persevere through it.

The Process:

1. Email Rebecca Sky, NH State Commission on Aging executive director to request a nomination form. Once completed, return the form to Rebecca at Rebecca.Sky@nh.gov
2. The deadline to return the nomination is **Friday, March 4, 2022.**
3. A joint committee of the NH State Commission on Aging and EngAGING NH will review all nominations and select one person or a couple from each county to be honored.
4. An Awards Ceremony will be scheduled during the month of May in observation of Older Americans Month. Governor Sununu will be invited to participate in the presentation of the awards, schedule permitting.
5. Every nominee (not only the award recipients) will receive a letter of commendation to let them know that they are appreciated by their community.



A Citizen Voice for the Aging Experience