



SOUTHERN GERONTOLOGIST

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J. James Cotter and Jo Ann O'Quin, Editors

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President's Message

Improving Elders' Lives: A Collaborative Enterprise

**28th Annual Meeting of the Southern Gerontological Society
Greensboro, NC April 11-14, 2007**

The Board of The Southern Gerontological Society (SGS) and I cordially invite you to attend the 28th Annual Meeting, which will be held April 11 - 14, 2007, at the Greensboro Marriott Downtown hotel in historic Greensboro, North Carolina. By including a special emphasis on connecting community leaders and professionals in the field of aging, this year's theme expands and develops the mission of SGS to bridge the gap between research and practice by generating, translating and applying knowledge in the field of aging.

The Annual meeting of SGS is the premier forum for researchers, academic gerontologists, and leaders in applied gerontology and practice from the South, and both old and new friends, to share ideas and issues in cutting-edge research and practice and to explore ways in which we can enrich the lives of elders and those concerned with their well being. The upcoming meeting promises to be memorable and thought-provoking. It will provide opportunities to explore innovation via networking as well as through presentation and discussion. Be sure to join me at the Opening Session as the President Elect for GSA, Lisa P. Gwyther, M.S.W. from the Duke University Medical Center Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, gives the Welcoming and Keynote Address.

The 2007 SGS conference will also be enriched by a link with the Aging is Good Business pre-conference summit on Wednesday, April 11, 2007, on the University of North Carolina at Greensboro campus. When I looked at the preliminary program on SGS's website (<http://www.wfu.edu/gerontology/sgs/>), it was exciting to see the convergence of these two meetings with an "Aging means Business" track running throughout the SGS meeting. Please join us for an intellectually challenging and personally rewarding experience in a beautiful springtime environment!

Constance L. Coogle, President

***Greensboro: An Exciting Host City for our Annual Meeting
Greensboro, North Carolina – The Gateway City***

- Greensboro is rich with history! Selected in the early 1840s to become a railroad hub, Greensboro substantially grew in size and soon became known as the Gateway City. The Greensboro Historical Museum is within walking distance, and directly across Elm Street from the Marriott Hotel you'll find visitor information at the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. The nearby Public Library offers an MP3 self-guided downtown walking tour. You'll walk past the Woolworth's store where in 1960 four college freshmen sat at the public lunch counter and asked to be served, beginning a sit-in that lasted nearly six months and helped launch the civil rights movement.
- The Greensboro Children's Museum (ranked among the Nation's Top 40 Best Children's Museums by Child Magazine) is also within walking distance, and there are some other wonderful attractions in Greensboro, such as the Natural Science Center and the Celebration Station amusement center.
- Conference participants will also view the Marshall Art Gallery and downtown's Art Deco architecture while shopping for gifts or antiques and dining in restaurants on Elm Street.
- After the conference, participate in one of the arranged tours to Replacements Ltd to find your grandmother's china pattern or to Furnitureland South, the world's largest home furnishings showplace featuring name-brand furniture, rugs, accessories and expert interior design assistance.
- In nearby Asheboro you'll find the North Carolina Zoo, as well as the North Carolina Aviation Museum, and in Randleman, there is the Richard Petty Museum.
- So come in early and/or stay after the conference is over to enjoy all that North Carolina has to offer!

SGS Contact Information

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Welcome to New Members

Karla A. Henderson - NC
Laura Pannell - MS
Barbara Hambacher - NC
Laura S. Bradford - NC
Pierrette Cazeau - FL
Dianne O'Donnell - GA
Patricia Fletcher - NY
Jennifer Graves - NC
Margaret M. Kennedy - NC
Jill Bass - VA

Grace Mitchell - NC
Ruth Garrett - TN
Katy Z. Taylor - NC
Nadine James - MS
Scott Tenbroeck - NC
Joseph M. Ritchey - SC
Roberta E. Dillon - NC
Linda Samuel - GA
Lorelei M. Watts - NC
Neal E. Cutler - NC
Rebecca T. Moore - MS

Eva Holtzer - FL
Anne P. Glass - GA
Giyeon Kim - FL
Vira Kivett - NC
Candace L. Kemp - GA
Linda Ornt - NC
James L. Ford - VA
David S. Dran - NC
Joe H. Han - NC
Brian Bookout - NC

Proposed SGS Bylaws Change: Term of appointment for *Journal of Applied Gerontology* editor (2nd Notice)

The Bylaws Committee submitted a report to the Board for its November meeting. The result is that there is only one item to be voted on at the 2007 SGS Business Meeting.

Bylaws Article IX, Section X states the *Journal of Applied Gerontology* editor and the Southern Gerontologist editor shall serve three-year renewable terms. The SGS Board of Directors proposes to replace "Both editors shall serve three-year renewable terms" with "The Southern Gerontologist editor shall serve a three-year renewable term. The *Journal of Applied Gerontology* editor shall serve a three-year term with the option of renewal for one, two or three years."

The Board's rationale is that the JAG editorship is not only a major time commitment, but also often includes a commitment of resources by the editor's institution. The proposed change will allow greater flexibility for both the editor and the editor's institution: rather than being forced to commit time and resources for a second three-year term, they will be able to opt for a shorter renewal term if desired.

The Board hereby notifies the membership that this proposed change to the Bylaws will be voted upon at the 2007 SGS Business Meeting.

Submitted by Ed Rosenberg, Chair, SGS Bylaws Committee

Editorial: The Ideals of the Older Americans Act

Just about 1/3 of all older persons in the US live in Southern states. As the Southern Gerontological Society reconvenes, we have had a year to contemplate the distinctiveness of southern aging and the unique role of the Southern Gerontological Society in making a better society for older persons.

What would a better society look like for older Southerners? I want to reiterate the goals from the Older Americans Act, reauthorized once again last year. Bred in a time more idealistic than our own, they remain a blueprint that we can still aspire to fulfill:

- (1)** An adequate income in retirement in accordance with the American standard of living.
- (2)** The best possible physical and mental health which science can make available and without regard to economic status.
- (3)** Obtaining and maintaining suitable housing, independently selected, designed and located with reference to special needs and available at costs which older citizens can afford.
- (4)** Full restoration services for those who require institutional care, and a comprehensive array of community-based, long-term care services adequate to appropriately sustain older people in their communities and in their homes, including support to family members and other persons providing voluntary care to older individuals needing long-term care services.
- (5)** Opportunity for employment with no discriminatory personnel practices because of age.
- (6)** Retirement in health, honor, dignity—after years of contribution to the economy.
- (7)** Participating in and contributing to meaningful activity within the widest range of civic, cultural, education and training and recreational opportunities.
- (8)** Efficient community services, including access to low-cost transportation, which provide a choice in supported living arrangements and social assistance in a coordinated manner and which are readily available when needed, with emphasis on maintaining a continuum of care for vulnerable older individuals.
- (9)** Immediate benefit from proven research knowledge which can sustain and improve health and happiness.
- (10)** Freedom, independence, and the free exercise of individual initiative in planning and managing their own lives, full participation in the planning and operation of community-based services and programs provided for their benefit and protection against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.”

We look forward to seeing you all at our SGS Annual Meeting next month in Greensboro and the opportunities to discuss how we make these ideals into reality.

-- J. James Cotter and Jo Ann O'Quin

SGS Membership: What's In It For You? How Do You Join?

Professionals exploring issues, applications and answers in the field of aging

SGS Annual Conference & Meeting: Leadership & Professional Networking; Continuing Education. Members receive a deep discount on registration fees for the annual meeting.

Publications: The Journal of Applied Gerontology, The Southern Gerontologist Newsletter. A free subscription to the **Journal of Applied Gerontology (JAG)**, the official journal of SGS is included with membership. The Journal is devoted to the publication of contributions that focus explicitly on the application of knowledge and insights from research and practice to improvement of the quality of life of older persons. Particular emphasis is placed on manuscripts and editorials that enhance dialogue among researchers, policy makers, and practitioners. In addition, members receive the **Southern Gerontologist**, a quarterly newsletter that complements JAG by providing updates on applied projects, member activities and emerging issues, and informing members of new books and videos of interest to the field of aging.

Student privileges: Membership discount, Conference registration discount, Networking & Leadership opportunities

SGS Committees are member friendly and provide an excellent opportunity to enhance one's professional development. By adding your voice to SGS you can help ensure that dialogue and cooperation maintain the balance between research and practice, through the guiding principle of SGS-- the alliance of practitioners and academicians to enhance the lives of our elders.

For more information contact **Lora Gage** SGS Executive Director, at Lgage4sgs@aol.com She will gladly send you an application and information. Don't miss the opportunity to become a member of a group of the South's most respected gerontology professionals.

JOIN TODAY!

Congratulations Secretary E. Douglas Beach!

E. Douglas Beach, Ph.D., Secretary Florida Department of Elder Affairs

On February 13, 2007, Governor Charlie Crist appointed Dr. E. Douglas Beach as the Secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. Secretary Beach has worked in the aging network for more than 12 years most recently serving as the Chief Executive Officer of the Senior Resource Alliance (Area Agency on Aging of Central Florida, Inc.) a planning, policy and resource agency serving Florida's seniors 60 years of age and older in Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties.

Secretary Beach was named CEO of the Senior Resource Alliance in September of 1999 and under his leadership, the organization's annual budget rose from \$16 to \$25 million. The Senior Resource Alliance became the first Aging and Disability Resource Center in Florida and has been recognized as one of the Top 10 Information and Referral systems in the nation.

Previously, Secretary Beach also served as the Staff Economist for Congressman David L. Hobson (R-OH). He was responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing the Congressman's activities on the House of Representatives' Budget Committee. Secretary Beach worked with the Congressman to write and introduce major legislation promoting insurance coverage for long-term care. Prior to his work in Washington, D.C., Secretary Beach served as the Deputy Director of Programs at the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA). He was responsible for managing a program budget of more than \$250 million, serving 1.9 million seniors in Ohio.

Secretary Beach is a founding member of the Orange County Commission on Aging and the Brevard County Commission on Aging. He has also served on several other Boards and Commissions, including the Florida Council on Aging; Florida Association of Area Agencies on Aging; Heart of Florida United Way; Mayor of Orlando's Senior Citizen Advisory Council; Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce; Orange County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; and **the Southern Gerontological Society**.

Secretary Beach received a B.A. degree in Biology from Kenyon College, a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from The Ohio State University and a Doctorate in Economics from North Carolina State University.

SGS Member News

A paper of **Jackie McClelland (North Carolina)** (Mitchell, R., Ash, S.L., & McClelland, J.W. (2006) Nutrition education among low-income older adults: A randomized intervention trial in congregate nutrition sites. *Health Education & Behavior*, 33(3), 374-392) was selected as the Lawrence W Green Award Paper of 2006 by *Health Education & Behavior*, the flagship journal of the Society of Public Health Educators. The award goes to the best work published in the journal that year and includes a \$1,000 prize.

Austin R. Curry, Executive Director Elder Care Advocacy of Florida was awarded the 2006 C. Colburn Hardy Older Advocate Award.

Carol A. Roth, LCSW has now received the CSW-G certification.

Joe Ritchey announces that The Family Caregiver Support Program located at the Central Midlands COG Area Agency on Aging won a national award for best practices. Findings will be presented at the N4A conference in San Francisco in July 2007.

Dena Shenk of North Carolina is working with the Universidad de Catolica de Santa Maria in Arequipa Peru to develop a Master's degree program in Gerontology to begin next fall. She is also working on a research project with the AMIGOS volunteers who work the poor rural elders in the surrounding region in southern Peru. This group is being considered as a model that could be expanded throughout Peru and the goal of her research is to study the model and its effectiveness in improving the situation for older adults, particularly those who do not have a pension or health insurance and were primarily farm workers.

Joan B. Wood, PhD, Professor in the Departments of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and a Past President of SGS, was awarded the Mildred M. Seltzer Distinguished Service Recognition by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.

Media Resources

One of my favorite videotapes for showing students, staff, and caregivers a view of Alzheimer's disease from a daughter's poignant documentary of her mother's disease is *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*. Debra Hoffman masterfully captures the early to middle stages of her mother's behaviors and the progression to institutional care. She provides a very personal glimpse of her reactions and dilemmas as a caregiver. She does so in a very engaging and at times humorous way. For more information to go: Women Make Movies website is: www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/makers/fm16.shtml

Have you got a special Media Resource you use in the classroom or for training? If so, let us know what it is and how you use it for educational purposes. Send to joquin@olemiss.edu

Ageing Resources: ElderFriends, Richmond, Virginia

There is a growing need for informal caregiving support in the south and nationwide. Trends such as families being spread across the country, caregivers working and caring for their own children, and the general desire among older adults to age in place, point to a definite need for programs that link older persons to support. ElderFriends is a public private partnership that addresses this need. Out of the Department of Gerontology at Virginia Commonwealth University, ElderFriends is a volunteer-based friendly visitation program, designed to help keep elders living in the community, in their own homes and remaining independent for as long as possible. The program recruits, screens, trains, supports and matches intergenerational volunteers with isolated elders for long term, regular, and ongoing friendly visits.

Social isolation among elders has long been recognized as an important problem that should be addressed in our efforts to maximize the well being of older adults. Social isolation has been associated with problems of low morale, poor health, and the risk of institutionalization. From self-care activities to cardiovascular disease to depression and loneliness, social isolation is a complex problem that affects every aspect of a person's life - biological, psychological, social, and spiritual. Strong and consistent evidence points to an important association between social network involvement and better physical health among older adults.

The distinguishing feature of ElderFriends is that we have a volunteer corps which is well trained, supported and is well versed in the community resources available to the aged. All ElderFriends volunteers submit to a criminal background check and participate in comprehensive training that helps them understand their role as a friendly visitor and makes them aware of existing community resources. ElderFriends has a formalized volunteer application process. Volunteers must commit to visit their elder a minimum of four times monthly for one year. In addition to visits, volunteers are encouraged to keep in contact with their elder friend by telephone. ElderFriends strives to assist our participants by broadening their knowledge and connecting them with these already existing services.

Through this program, we offer volunteers of all ages the opportunity to support the elderly who live in our community through friendships and an inter-generational celebration of life. ElderFriends fosters the services, activities and programming which have been proven in a number of different settings to promote health, independence and self-advocacy for isolated low-income elders in our community.

For more information, please contact: ElderFriends, Department of Gerontology, Virginia Commonwealth University, www.elderfriendsva.org, email: elderfriends@vcu.edu, 804 828-6059.

Welcome from SGS's New Student Representative

Dianne O'Donnell, Georgia State University

As the student representative to the Board of Directors of SGS, my primary goal is to expand the student membership in SGS. We thought a brief introduction about my perspective on membership in SGS might be helpful. We welcome your thoughts and views as well.

Prior to graduate school in gerontology, I worked in human resources, compensation and employee benefits. The field was extremely broad, diverse and always changing, depending on the perspectives (often competing) of employee, employer, advisor, insurance company or government regulator. The ability to maintain current technical proficiency and network with practitioners in a variety of businesses was absolutely invaluable as I developed professionally. To this end, I supplemented my day-to-day work with the membership resources of several professional organizations.

Gerontology is similarly diverse and continually evolving. As with human resources, we work with people but then must respect the additional complexities often brought on by old age. We can study sociology, psychology, economics, political science, law, health, etc. for years in the classroom, but it is quite a different matter to be out in the field applying our academic training to solving problems and issues experienced by older adults. As an action-oriented organization dedicated to the issues impacting older residents in our region, SGS is an excellent resource to help students prepare for a career.

Students benefit from the SGS academic and news publications, discounted meeting fees and access to a diverse group of professionals who want to help students succeed in our field. Membership in professional societies is also appreciated and expected by potential employers and other graduate programs.

The Board welcomes any ideas you have about how best to bring the resources of SGS to the students of gerontology. I look forward to working with you.

Dianne O'Donnell, Georgia State University
dodonnell3@student.gsu.edu

Calendar

For those of you interested in upcoming conferences, check out the Gerontological Society of America's listing at <http://www.geron.org/USCalendar.htm>. Here's a listing of a few of the more general conferences coming up.

April 11 – 14, 2007 (This premier conference should not be missed!)

Greensboro, NC. 27th Annual Meeting of the Southern Gerontological Society, for further info see <http://www.wfu.edu/gerontology/sgs/>

April 27, 2007

Fort Myers, Florida. "6th Annual Southwest Florida Conference on Aging". For more information, contact Karen Landy, M.S at 1-800-590-FGCU(3428), ext. 7463 or email: klandy@fgcu.edu

June 16-19, 2007

Toronto, Canada. "Growing Older with a Disability". Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology.

July 29-August 1, 2007

San Francisco, CA. "Gateway to the New World of Aging", National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's 32nd Annual Conference & Tradeshow. Hyatt Regency San Francisco, For more information, please visit: <http://www.n4a.org/2007conf/sanfran2007.cfm>.

September 30-October 3, 2007

Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Reaching New Heights in Successful Community Living", the 23rd National Home and Community Based Services Conference, convened by National Association of State Units on Aging New Mexico Aging and Long Term Services Department. Hyatt Regency Albuquerque. For more information, please visit: <http://www.nasua.org/waiverconference/index.htm>.