



# SOUTHERN GERONTOLOGIST

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## ***President's Message***

Since the last newsletter the SGS conference program has begun to coalesce organizationally. For the 2009 conference we want to actively engage and promote the practice community. Thus I am pleased to announce dual program chairs for next April's conference: Maureen Kelly, President/CEO of the West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging, will spearhead the practitioner side of the program, working closely with SE4A (Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging) President Nancy Robertson. Dr. James Peacock, Associate Director of Gerontology at Appalachian State University, will oversee the program's academic track. (Of course there is symbiotic overlap.)

As SGS celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary we will reflect on the organization's genesis and its evolution. (Or intelligent design.) But, at least as important, I encourage a focus on the decades to come, when the Baby Boomers will be America's elders and our younger gerontology practitioners and academics will have their greatest impact. Keep a "future focus" in mind as you consider presentation topics for the 2009 meeting. In this and subsequent columns, I'll try to stimulate such thinking.

A recent New York Times article<sup>1</sup> highlighted the rapidity with which America will become a minority-majority nation. I was struck in particular by the projected growth of minority elders - this clearly implies new, culturally competent approaches to gerontology practice and education; tomorrow's gerontology practitioners and teachers will need different knowledge bases and skills and will be working with a different type of clientele.

A second issue affecting elders' future is the declining rate of personal savings<sup>2</sup> - in fact, the current rate, nationally, is negative! The Great Depression taught the value of frugality, of saving for a financial rainy day. Many Americans forgot or ignored those lessons and, lured by easy

credit and mortgages and a booming stock market, find themselves using their home equity and what savings they have to avoid bankruptcy. Add to that the problematic solvency of Social Security and, especially, Medicare, and we see that gerontological academics and practitioners, in the future, will have plenty of challenges. How will such trends affect elderly Baby Boomer financial security, and how will that affect younger generations?

If there's one thing getting more ink these days than gerontology, it's the imminent election. (No, not American Idol - the one in November. Don't forget to vote!) Here's another way to be forward-thinking in the SGS presentation proposals you'll soon be asked to submit: what will be the likely effect of the results of the election on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your favorite gerontological topic here)? Of course, you won't know the results before submitting your proposal, but that makes it all the more exciting! How will gerontology practitioners/agencies and academics/universities adapt to and be treated by a McCain or Obama administration? Given that the Baby Boomers will begin turning 65 during that time, the gerontology community's response will be more significant than ever before.

Given the current weak economy, employment and housing problems, and rising travel costs, it will take a conscious effort from all of us to make the 2009 conference a success. The program, we know, will be there, as will opportunities for shopping and entertainment. We've negotiated an affordable room rate at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront. What we need from you is... you! Please make plans to be there - mark your calendar, set aside travel funds, prepare to submit a presentation proposal, encourage your colleagues/students to attend.

As you can see, there's plenty of aging-related issues, present and future, to think about and discuss with friends, students, colleagues and family. All the more reason to share your thoughts, knowledge and achievements with us in St. Petersburg next April, and encourage others to do the same.

-- **Ed Rosenberg, President**

<sup>1</sup><http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/14/washington/14census.html?ex=1219377600&en=a59e68571fdc2ab6&ei=5070&emc=eta1>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/15/opinion/15fri1.html?ex=1219464000&en=4635a1e814d226b0&ei=5070&emc=eta1>

### ***SGS Contact Information***

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## ***New SGS Website***

Don't forget to check out the new SGS website. Victor Marshall and the UNC Institute on Aging have done a fabulous job of recreating our site. I encourage you to go there and check it out.

Once again, thanks to Victor and his website maven, Danielle Borasky!

Web address

<http://southerngerontologicalsociety.org/sgs/index.asp>

## ***A FEW WORDS FROM THE SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE***

I've always liked round numbers and a really important one is coming up for SGS – the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our founding as an organization in 1979 and our 30<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida in 2009. As Senior Representative, I'd like to extend a very special and personal invitation to all charter and retired members of SGS to attend this highly significant milestone in the life of an organization that has meant so much to us during our professional careers. The Program Planning Committee is hard at work putting together a really memorable meeting and one of its features will be the traditional Retiree-Student Reception, which will probably be on the evening of Friday, April 17, 2009. I'm also hoping that we can have a special seminar involving the sharing of 30 years of memories by the charter members of SGS. These events, involving charter, retired, and student members of SGS, should help us to appreciate where we've been, where we are, and where we're going in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

St. Petersburg, for those of you who haven't been there ever or lately, is a very interesting place for a gerontological society meeting. At one time, it was a prime destination for retirees looking for lots of sunshine, low taxes, and a more relaxed way of life and the city gladly accommodated their needs and interests. There are still many older persons there but, for a number of years, the city has been trying to reconstitute itself as an enjoyable area for all age groups and as a major tourist destination. This means there are lots of good restaurants and things to see – including the world famous Dali Museum – in an atmosphere of friendly, tourist-oriented hospitality within easy walking distance of our meeting hotel.

If you don't already know, our meeting hotel for the 2009 meeting – the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront – has a great deal of sentimental value because it is the same hotel where the initial planning meeting for SGS was held in 1979. And yet, it is not exactly the same hotel because it has been completely renovated in the last couple of years. Unlike some hotels where SGS and other gerontological associations have met in the past, it is large enough to provide plenty of guest and meeting rooms and, yet, small enough so that you'll always know where you are in it. It is also very close to the waterfront in downtown St. Petersburg and overlooks an attractive marina with many pricey boats. If you're coming to the meeting on your own boat, you'll probably be able to tie up at the marina and hop across a street or two to the hotel. No matter how you come, though, please do come and help to make this one of the best meetings ever.

-- Wiley P. Mangum, PhD

### *And Some Words From The SGS Student Representative*

Let's celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SGS where it all began: St. Petersburg, Florida, the home of the first conference in 1978! Student membership of the Southern Gerontological Society can provide invaluable experiences and contacts.

Students, bring your résumés and discover the vast array of job opportunities in the field of gerontology.

Faculty, please share with all of your students the significance of experiencing a professional and academic conference.

Several students indicated at the last conference that it would be valuable to have an information session related to job opportunities in the field of gerontology. We plan to provide such a session at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference.

Also, some students may be interested in continuing their graduate education. One question students may want to address is "should I pursue a PhD in Gerontology, or in a traditional discipline, such as psychology or sociology, with a focus in aging studies?" Professors, please let me know what you suggest. We can incorporate your suggestions into the *career information session* at the upcoming conference! I am available via email at [jw51381@appstate.edu](mailto:jw51381@appstate.edu).

-- Julie Wiggins, SGS Student Representative

## **Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront St. Petersburg, FL**

It's a great hotel. Check it out at:

[http://www1.hilton.com/en\\_US/hi/hotel/SPTSHHF-Hilton-St-Petersburg-Bayfront-Florida/index.do](http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/SPTSHHF-Hilton-St-Petersburg-Bayfront-Florida/index.do)



## ***Welcome to New Members***

Myrna Miller – NC  
Elizabeth Bernat – SC

Betsy Sprouse – DC  
Hee Soon Lee – SC

Maggie Roe – KY  
Becky Wharton - KY

## ***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](mailto: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!***

## *Selected Resources for a Better Aging*

### Grandparenting Resources:

The **AARP** site <http://www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting/> provides a wealth of information for Grandparents, and is especially useful for a source on the myriad of issues facing grandparents or other relatives that are raising grandchildren. The free newsletter can be obtained in hard copy and is a useful publication for those who may not have computer access.

### Safety Resources for those with Memory Loss:

**Safe Return** has teamed with **Medic Alert** to provide a national tollfree number and support program if an individual becomes lost. You can access the information on [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

**Project Lifesaver** is a national program that is becoming more available in counties across the county to provide a quick, reliable method of searching for those who have wandered off and become lost due to Alzheimer's disease or related disorders. The Pilot Club in many communities are teaming up with local law enforcement to provide the technology needed to provide this tracking system. This system is particularly important for those individuals who are mobile and experiencing memory loss. For more information, contact Project Lifesaver at <http://www.projectlifesaver.org/site/>

-- Jo Ann O'Quin, Editor

### *Get a Move on for Alzheimer's Disease*

The Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk® is the largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's in the nation. Walks are held throughout the nation, many in the fall months. Check out <http://www.alz.org/memorywalk/team.asp> to find a walk near you.

## ***SGS Member News***

**James Peacock** was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor at Appalachian State University.

**Jan Vinita White**, PhD, Gerontologist, was approved as a continuing education provider by the Alabama Board of Nursing and is the only gerontologist educating nurses in northern Alabama.

**Frank Whittington** has left the Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University in Atlanta, after 35 years, to take a new position as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Health and Human Services at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Frank is sad to leave all his Georgia friends but looks forward to working more closely with his new SGS colleagues in Virginia. Frank also is serving on the GSA/AGHE Merger Evaluation Task

Force and has been appointed to chair the AGHE International Task Force for the coming year.

**Dr. Joyce Varner** received the University of South Alabama College of Nursing Faculty Service Award for 2008 for my work with elders in the community and long-term care.

**Kathy Sergeant** of the Knoxville-Knox County (Tennessee) Community Action Committee – Office on Aging, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, started a new program in January 2008 called the One Call Club for Seniors to help them maintain their health and independence by providing one-phone-call access to any service the members need so they can remain safely in their homes.

**Austin R. Curry** and the Elder Care Advocacy of Florida have been recognized by the EPA Aging Initiative for outstanding promotion and support of the Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging Awards Program, the only Florida based effort so recognized.

### ***Upcoming in the Journal of Applied Gerontology***

Sophie Laforest, Kareen Nour, Monique Gignac, Lise Gauvin, Manon Parisien, and Marie-Christine Poirier

**Short-Term Effects of a Self-Management Intervention on Health Status of Housebound Older Adults With Arthritis**

Sharon Wallace Williams, Tejas Desai, Jeffrey T. Rurka, and Elizabeth J. Mutran

**Predictors of Satisfaction for African-American and White Family Caregivers of Adult Care Home Residents**

Voon Chin Phua and James W. McNally

**Men Planning for Retirement: Changing Meanings of Preretirement Planning**

Nicholas G. Castle

**State Differences and Facility Differences in Nursing Home Staff Turnover**

Tania R. Bertoldo Benedetti, Lúcia Hisako Takase Gonçalves, Edio Luiz Petroski, Silvia M. Nassar, Andiara Schwingel, and Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko

**Aging in Brazil: Physical Activity, Socioeconomic Conditions, and Diseases Among Older Adults in Southern Brazil**

David Dran

**A New Look at Episodes of Mistaken Identity: Opportunities for Preserving Personhood**

— Malcolm Cutchin, Editor, *Journal of Applied Gerontology*

***Got news? Got resource information? Send it to editors today!***

The Schroeder Symposium  
How Should Virginia's Healthcare System Be Reformed?: State Health Policy and Health  
Information Technology

The College of William & Mary Williamsburg, VA  
Thursday September 18, 2008, 3pm - 6pm.  
University Center Commonwealth Auditorium

Purpose: This meeting is open to everyone, especially health policy makers, health administrators, all types of clinicians, graduate and undergraduate students, and people from the community and region. The overarching theme of the Schroeder Symposium is state healthcare reform with a specific topic addressed each year. This pre-election symposium will focus on something both candidates endorse -- expanding the use of health information technology, especially electronic medical records and personal health records. Some place great hope in accelerated adoption of health information technology to empower consumers to manage their healthcare and health, encourage prevention, reduce administrative costs and generally improve care coordination.

The speaker this year, Micky Tripathi, is Executive Director, Massachusetts eHealth Initiative. The Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative was formed in 2004 as an initiative of the physician community to bring together the state's major health care stakeholders for the purpose of establishing an electronic health records system that would enhance the quality, efficiency and safety of care in Massachusetts.

For more information and to register:  
<http://www.wm.edu/publicpolicy/newsarchive.php?fetchid=9059>

### ***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 located in the South coming up.

#### **August 20-22, 2008**

Washington, DC. The Pioneer Network's 8th National Conference, "A Call To Action," offers a look at what's new and cool in the long-term care culture change movement. Go to [www.pioneernetwork.net](http://www.pioneernetwork.net) to see the request for proposals.

#### **October 26-29 Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A), 2008**

Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) annual training conference will be at the beautiful Beau Rivage Casino in Biloxi, MS. See [www.se4a.org](http://www.se4a.org) for information.

April 16-19, 2009. St. Petersburg, Florida. **SGS's 30th Anniversary Annual Meeting.**  
<http://southerngerontologicalsociety.org/sgs/index.asp>