



SOUTHERN GERONTOLOGIST

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Passing the baton in the SGS presidential relay seems to be more of a process than an event. Current President Ed Rosenberg handed the gavel to me during the Awards Luncheon at the annual meeting a few weeks ago in St. Petersburg. According to SGS by-laws, however, the term of the in-coming President does not begin until July 1st. Nonetheless I would like to share a few observations as a pre-term lame duck.

Concern about our economic circumstances is pervasive. In North Carolina, all non-essential travel is frozen for state employees and supply orders have to be justified and approved as essential. It seems that, although the fiscal pain is widespread, some states are feeling the pinch more than others.

In the midst of all of this, we are beginning to plan and organize efforts to promote next year's SGS annual meeting. Whether the meeting will be in a Raleigh or Richmond hotel will be decided in the next few weeks. For continuity and with the support of the next in-coming President, the 2011 meeting will be the runner-up location.

With site identification, meeting dates (the vicinity of April 8th – 10th, 2010), and theme, "Applied Gerontology as Community Engagement," will be confirmed.

Our goal is to promote the meeting by exhibiting at the GSA meetings in Atlanta in November. Also, Ed Rosenberg and I will also promote the SGS meeting this September, when we attend the SE4A annual meeting in Charleston, SC. While in Charleston, we will talk with SE4A leadership about potential cross-fertilization including SE4A presentation(s) at SGS and vice-versa.

Commitment to an annual meeting next spring and its theme reflect commitment to the

relevance of SGS and the value of annual interpersonal contact and information exchange. Universities and colleges are pressed by state legislatures holding purse strings to demonstrate their impact on the regions and communities that they serve. Many have responded by seeking or obtaining Carnegie classification as an Engaged University. This implies connections or relationships between university scholars and communities. Campus conversations and dialogue about the meaning and implementation of the “scholarship of engagement” in tenure and promotion decisions are widespread and these topics are somewhat controversial. I believe that SGS can serve as a venue for such conversations and as an example that academically-legitimate scholarship can be combined with community or regional engagement.

SGS has a long and proud tradition in the scholarship of engagement. As an organization, it has much to offer in the way of bridging academic with practitioner interests. The applied gerontological tradition of SGS is reflected in its mission, its membership, its annual meeting programs, and in the academic journal which it sponsors. Economic uncertainty is not the best climate to increase SGS membership and annual meeting participation, but SGS has much to offer those seeking examples and definitions of the scholarship of engagement.

I hope that all of you will help spread the word and think about how you might contribute to next year’s annual meeting. Please spread the word on your own campuses, particularly among administrators struggling with the notion of the scholarship of engagement.

Best wishes for the summer season.
Jim Mitchell

PRESIDENT ROSENBERG’S OPENING ADDRESS: THE PAST AS PROLOGUE

Main Points, by Ed Rosenberg, April 16, 2009

This is a special and momentous conference for us.... First, this is the 30th annual SGS meeting, and we want to take the occasion to recognize, honor and thank those members who created SGS and have supported it, with their presence and their mentoring, for the past three decades.... Second, we are on the cusp of the Baby Boom generation turning 65 - that will begin in 2011.... So Boomer elders are no longer the future; they are the present.... And even when the Boomers die off, we will of course remain an aged society – that is the fate of nations with highly developed medical science and technology.... America will not become significantly younger when the Baby Boomers pass on to that Great Woodstock in the Sky. We will always have a relatively large proportion of elders, and we will always need people to work with and for them.

Thus, third, those of us in practice need to prepare for this generational and demographic sea change.... The Boomers as elders will differ from today’s elders in many and significant ways... Successful practice and academic gerontologists, living in the present, now have to also proactively plan for the future, for the very different group of older persons that will soon, in unprecedented numbers, be the focus of our work.... We need practice innovations, and we need to encourage and add a new generation of innovative, energetic practitioners, if we are to have a hope of meeting the aging-related challenges of the coming decades....

Fourth, SGS’s 50th annual meeting will be in 2029, coincidentally the same year the last Boomers turn 65. I anticipate some interesting reflections then! But certainly this means the next 20 years are as critical for gerontology as any decades have ever been.

The theme of this conference is “the past as prologue”, and thus we have two foci: the past, reflecting on SGS as it turns 30, and the future: the aging of the Baby Boomers and the challenges that poses for all of us. This is why your program cover features the god Janus, who looks both backward and forward. Let’s take advantage of the next few days to both reflect and “pre-flect”...

I especially welcome our newer and younger members from academia and the practice sector - you are the future of aging policy, practice and education in America, and you are the future of SGS....

I’d like to make one more point, and to me it is a most important one. We know the Baby Boomers will be the largest, healthiest, most active and wealthiest generation of American elders ever, even with the recession. The recession was a major speed bump in the glorification of this generation....

As good an example as any of dangers of Boomer glorification is the evolution of their treatment over the past decade by AARP.... The organization seemed to become slicker, the magazine seemed more a marketing tool; there seemed less advocacy and more self-congratulation, less substance and more style.... It mirrored the economic tenor of the times and reflected the new demographic market – the Boomers – that AARP was pursuing....

[But] there are significant sub-populations of current and future elders who are scarcely seen or heard from in the growing number of entrepreneurial attempts to separate better-off Boomers from their money.... [such as] the 24% of elders without a high school diploma... the 81% without a college degree... the 10% of elders below the poverty line...the 26% classified as “near-poor”... older African American households, whose median net worth is only 1/6 that of whites... the 23% of young-old and 39% of old-old who are functionally illiterate.... I could go on. And... the older one is, the more at risk one becomes.

What frightens me is that Boomer glorification becomes over-generalized and seen as representative of elders *in toto*.... We should not let the AARP magazine and others like it that glorify aging Boomers, nor all the anti-aging businesses trying to separate vain Boomers from their money... we should not let these things be an opiate, as Karl Marx would say, that gives us a false high – 60 is the new 40! – and distracts us from a full awareness of our diverse population of elders by focusing only on those who are two standard deviations above the mean.

The good news is that... there will be plenty of aging-related jobs.... We’ll need hands-on people, and people to manage those hands-on people... because there will be more elders, and there will be more elders with economic, health-related, psychological, and social needs. You don’t see too many of these folks in glossy magazine photo layouts. But they’re out there. And they will need you.

...we live in truly interesting times. The Chinese, who are often credited with the phrase, “May you live in interesting times”, interpreted “interesting times” to be times of turmoil and upheaval, and thus used the phrase as a curse. Well, here we are, in times of economic, demographic, and geopolitical upheaval.... Never before has there been such a need for gerontological practice and scholarship that is innovative, effective, and cost-effective. I encourage us all, but especially our younger and newer members, to see this challenge as an opportunity... to re-examine and redirect what we know about elders, about the lived experience of aging, about policies and programs that affect elders, and about how to apply our scientific knowledge to the practical enhancement of the lives of older persons.... My hope is that when we gather for SGS’s 40th annual meeting, we will find that your efforts have been successful, and... that... we are living, in 2019, in far less ‘interesting times.’

(Note: For full text of remarks, visit the SGS Website at

<http://www.southerngerontologicalsociety.org/sgs/annualmeeting/index.asp>)

SGS 2009 Student Paper Awards

1st place award (\$250): Elizabeth Corsentino, a doctoral student in the psychology program at Florida State University. Her advisor is Dr. Natalie Sachs-Ericsson. The title of her paper was “Religious Attendance Reduces Cognitive Decline among Older Women with High Levels of Depressive Symptoms”.

2nd place award (\$150): Sang Gon Nam, a doctoral student at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. His advisor is Dr. Kyriakos Markides. The title of his paper was “The Effect of Medical Conditions on Self-Reported Disability in Older Mexican Americans”.

3rd place award (\$150): Chih-ling Liou, a doctoral student at Virginia Tech. The paper she submitted represented her master’s thesis at the University of North Carolina – Charlotte under the direction of Dr. Dena Shenk. The title of her paper is “Social Support Systems of Older Chinese Americans: Who Can They Ask for Help”.

The SGS Best Practices Award

To recognize programs that demonstrate an innovative and creative linkage with the aging services network, show evidence of sustained effort and sustained impact on improving the quality of life of older adults, and have the potential to influence aging services in the SGS region.

2009 Award Recipient: Hillsborough County Aging Services

Hillsborough County Aging Services and their outstanding “Senior Zone” and “Senior Safety Zone” programs in Tampa, Florida. Hillsborough County serves the larger Tampa area. In 2006, Hillsborough County Aging Services partnered with Hillsborough County Public Works Department to enhance safety for senior drivers and pedestrians. In September, 2006 the first “Senior Zone” program was established at John Knox Village, a large continuing care retirement community. A wide variety of safety features were installed including reflective pavement markers, a high emphasis pedestrian crossover, increased times for crosswalks, installation of cameras to detect pedestrians, etc. This pilot program has now been expanded to other “senior zones” in Hillsborough County.

The Rhoda Jennings Older Advocate Award

2009 Recipient: Austin Curry

This year’s recipient has been a vibrant and visible force for many years as an advocate for the needs and concerns of older Floridians, their caregivers and families. He has also been a recognized expert on veteran’s issues. He is perhaps best known as a long time member of the Florida Silver Haired Legislature, and served as President of that Senate. He is known to Florida’s legislators and their staffs as an expert on elder issues. Locally, he is very active on the boards of various health provider agencies, as well as the Kinship Care Center and the Moffitt Cancer Center at USF.

The Applied Gerontologist Award

Given to an SGS member who has a sustained record of leadership in the field of aging including innovative programs that link research and practice, all of which have clear impact on the quality of life of older persons.

2009 Recipient: Dr. Joyce Varner

Dr. Varner has a sustained record of leadership in the field of aging, with special emphasis on the role of the Gerontological Nurse Practitioner. She has been an active participant in the National Conference of Gerontological Nurse Practitioners and provided leadership for the Advancing Excellence in Nursing Homes workgroup. She holds a clinical appointment in the Gerontological and Geropsych Nurse Practitioner Program at the University of South Alabama. In that capacity, she has developed several innovative programs related to research, education, management and service delivery. She was appointed by the Governor to the Alabama Board of Directors of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators. She has also coordinated and presented at the National GNP Review Course. She has also been a regular presenter at SGS, bringing her applied experience to important research issues.

The Academic Gerontologist Award

2009 Recipient: Dr. Frank J. Whittington

Dr. Whittington defines the linkage between the academic and applied sectors. He began his academic career in 1973 at Georgia State University, joining the Department of Sociology and the Gerontology Faculty. In 1995 assumed the role of director, a position he held until past year when he became the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the College of Health and Human Services at George Mason University. At Georgia State, he was a valued teacher and mentor and an esteemed colleague. He directed many doctoral dissertations and theses, and one of his students, Sharon King, was a previous winner of the SGS Student Paper Award. His research interests focus on the social dimensions of health and health care of older persons, especially African Americans. Among his many publications, he co-authored a 2005 book titled Communities of Care: Assisted Living for African Americans, and he edited, with colleagues Erdman Palmore of Duke and Suzanne Kunkel of Miami University, the International Handbook on Aging. He has been a most active member of SGS for many years, serving as a Board member and 2007-2008 President.

Thank You to Sponsors of the SGS Annual Meeting

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University of North Carolina Institute on Aging

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- University of South Florida School of Aging Studies
- Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Allied Health Professions, Dept. of Gerontology and Doctoral Program in Health Related Sciences
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SGS 2010 - Results of the Membership Survey

In March 2009 Jim Mitchell and Ed Rosenberg sent a survey electronically to all SGS members for whom SGS had valid email addresses. Concern about SGS membership trends, plus the national economic downturn and its impact on academic and practice gerontologists' ability to attend and support the 2009 annual meeting, led us to solicit SGS members' intentions and suggestions for keeping SGS viable in the years to come. Such information is always useful, but especially when money is tight and decisions about which organizations to join and which conferences to attend are more difficult to make.

About a quarter of the group responded. Most (81%) intend to maintain their SGS membership in 2010. However, over half were uncertain whether or not they'd attend the 2010 conference, but a majority said it should not be cancelled. (Note: at the time of the survey the 2010 conference dates and location had not been determined.) The remainder was equally split between those who said they would attend (24%) and would not attend (22%).

Two other topics of current interest to SGS leadership are SGS's relationship with the Southeast Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) and technology-facilitated options for SGS conference participation and presentation. While a joint SGS-SE4A conference made "no difference" in 42% of SGS respondents' plans to attend a 2010 conference (22% said they'd be more likely to attend a joint conference, 19% less likely, 17% uncertain), about one-third favored SGS continuing to discuss a more formal collaborative arrangement with SE4A (12% opposed, the rest "uncertain" or "no difference to me").

Members were also asked if, were the opportunity available, they would consider virtual attendance and/or virtual presentation (e.g., webcasts or two-way interactive TV). One-third said they would attend the 2010 conference on-site even if such "virtual" options existed. Over one-quarter would submit a proposal to present from a remote location (44% would not).

In sum, most respondents plan to retain their SGS membership through 2010. A majority want a 2010 conference but are uncertain about attending it, most likely due to not knowing the dates, location, and their own 2010 budgets. Only about 12% oppose continued collaboration with SE4A, but only about one-fifth say a joint SGS-SE4A conference would be more attractive to them than an SGS stand-alone conference. Using communications technologies for virtual presentation and/or attendance has enough appeal to merit continued exploration, though many logistical details remain to be worked out.

Ed Rosenberg, Immediate Past President

Editorial: Southern Food

June is National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month. This is my second year participating in a farm as part of the Community Supported Agriculture movement. I buy a share of the farm at the beginning of the year and reap the rewards of the farm throughout the summer. It helps the farmer, a wonderful woman named Anne Geyer, by spreading around some of the risk. Bad weather and poor harvest means not as much fruit and vegetables during the seasons. Good weather and good harvests means a sumptuous table all summer. The farmer gets help with cash flow and a set group of consumers whom the farmer can get to know. For my family, it's the chance to eat ultra fresh food and to link back to the seasons. Instead of buying strawberries from Mexico all year round, we get to anticipate strawberry season again, to overeat that plump and righteous fruit until we are satiated, and to miss strawberries once their season is ended. (Likewise with asparagus, blueberries, snap peas, blackberries, peaches, and so forth). In fall, when the growing season is fully over, we have a sense that we have more fully experienced the cycles of the earth. We also get to make a friend in Anne, visit the farm if we wish, and learn more about how to prepare and preserve local fruit and vegetables. I think it's a chance to get back to a more Southern tradition, a more rural tradition of living close to the land. A tradition of gardens on every plot of land, food that nurtured and sustained folks with vitamins and minerals not washed away or added post production but direct from sun and red clay soil. And I haven't even mentioned the benefits of using less oil to transport produce half way across the world.

June is also National Hunger Awareness Month. So every week when I pick up my tray of fresh fruits and vegetables, I'm aware of how lucky I am to have the means to participate in investment in a farm. Canned and frozen vegetables are often cheaper and to those on a tighter budget, fresh produce may be a luxury. What's even cheaper to fill hungry bellies is highly processed bread, rice, beans, pasta, potatoes, with fried food as the luxury. I laugh and cry that the most expensive and most nutritious of these products are those which are organic, i.e. those that are more minimally processed. As in so many areas of this land of plenty, we have plenty of food, but sometimes the food that combats hunger doesn't always contribute to health or to the local community. Some people don't have enough money for an adequate diet let alone a healthy diet. Food banks across the country don't have enough food to meet the need.

Eating well is not easy and it's not cheap. So we might take a lesson from Southern traditions epitomized by such people as George Washington Carver (<http://www.nps.gov/gwca/>), considered by some to be the father of modern sustainable agriculture. For more information check out the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (<http://www.ssawg.org/overview.html>). Grow more of our food. If that's not possible, link up with folks who grow food near us, support small family farms and local produce. And find a way to support food banks and home delivered meals programs. The sharing of food is a universal tradition but has a special place, on so many levels, in the South.

Now maybe just one more bowl of strawberries.

— J. James Cotter

SGS Contact Information

Lora Gage, SGS Executive Director
Lgage4sgs@aol.com

Web address
<http://www.wfu.edu/academics/gerontology/sgs/>

Office phone and Fax: 941 541-2011

Welcome to New Members

Debora Thompson - NC
Kelly Giles - NC
Cherie Simpson - TX
Marita O'Brien - GA
Katherine Olsen - GA
Nicole Collins - FL
Ken Jasnau - GA
Tamar Shoali - GA
Shoshana Bardach - KY
Juliette Christie - GA

Elizabeth Hahn - FL
Bridgett Rahim-Williams -
FL
Norm Bungard - FL
Keith Dooley - KY
Carolyn Turturro - AR
Elizabeth Corsentino - FL
Kathryn Sawyer - FL
Steven Studebaker - NC
John LoCurto - NC

Linda Trimmer - VA
Ouaypon Tungthongchai -
NC
Rosemarie Lamm - FL
Vera Reublinger - FL
Jean Berken - GA
Christine Caulfield - TX
Janelle Christensen - FL
Jillian Terhune - KY
Catherine McCarty - FL

SGS Member News

Robert Young (Georgia State) has won the Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization Interdisciplinary Paper Award for 2008 from GSA.

Stephen M. Golant has just had his book published. Stephen M. Golant & Joan Hyde, The Assisted Living Residence: A Vision for the Future. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008.

The Gerontology Institute at Georgia State University is pleased to announce that **Dr. Elisabeth O. Burgess** will be assuming the role of Institute Director effective January 2, 2009. Dr. Burgess is an associate professor of sociology and has been affiliated with the Institute since 1997, most recently serving as Graduate Director.

Brandi McCullough received the George and Beatrice Goldman Fisher Gerontology Master's Thesis Award from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her master's thesis is titled "React and Go with it": Interviewing Persons with Alzheimer's Disease about their Friendships. (Thesis Committee: Dr. Rebecca Adams, **Dr. Jan Wassel**, Dr. Eleanor

Stoller.)

Honorable mention from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education David A. Peterson Award was given to **Connie Coogle** (VCU) and colleagues in recognition of excellence in scholarship in academic gerontology for their paper: Coogle, C. L., & Parham, I. A., Jablonski, R., & Rachel, J. A. (2007). The value of geriatric care enhancement training for direct service workers. Gerontology and Geriatrics Education, 28(2), 109-131.

Caroline S. Westerhof, PhD recently published The Petology Series: Letters to Charlye about pet grief.

Dr. Joyce Varner, Clinical Associate Professor at the University of South Alabama College of Nursing in Mobile, AL is elected President of the Alpha Zeta Chapter of Sigma Phi Omega, the National Academic Honor and Professional Society in Gerontology.

Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., the area agency on aging, in far southwest Virginia, led by **Marilyn Pace Maxwell** recently celebrated the first anniversary of its Mountain Empire Program of All-Inclusive Care For The Elderly, one of the very first rural PACE Programs in the nation. Also Governor Timothy M. Kaine recognized Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC) as a recipient of its 2009 United We Ride National Leadership Award from the US Department of Transportation for leadership in developing a high-quality, coordinated health and human services transportation system, one of only five such awards in the country.

Norm Bungard was recently honored by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Pinellas County Florida with a Lifetime Achievement Award for service on the RSVP Council for 11 years and for his 22-year history of volunteering with Pinellas Habitat for Humanity.

Joe Ritchey has just completed six years as a member of the South Carolina Gerontological Society Board, including a year as President.

Carol A. Roth, LCSW, CSW-G has become Board Certified Counselor with the American Psychotherapy Association and a Diplomat of the American Psychotherapy Association

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!

Upcoming in Journal of Applied Gerontology

Watch for these articles to be published in the Journal of Applied Gerontology in the coming summer:

Mobility in old age: Beyond the transportation perspective

By Heinz-Juergen Kaiser

Evaluation of an education and support program for early-stage Alzheimer's disease by Scott Roberts, Elaine Silverio

Barriers to Outpatient Care in Community-Dwelling Elderly with Dementia: The Role of Caregiver Life Satisfaction by Joshua Thorpe, Courtney van Houtven, Betsy Sleath

The Relationship of Social Engagement to Psychosocial Well-being of Older Adults in Assisted Living Facilities by Nan Sook Park

Understanding and improving the burden and unmet needs of informal caregivers of homebound patients enrolled in a home-based primary care program by Katherine Ornstein, Kristofer Smith, Jeremy Boal

Demographic Determinants of Necessary Dissaving Among Older Persons by Jeromey

Temple, Peter Brandon

Late Life Volunteering and Trajectories of Physical Health by Fengyan Tang

Media Resources

TO YOU SWEETHEART, ALOHA: A New Documentary On 94-Year-Old Ukulele Legend Bill Tapia

In a previous issue, Jo Ann O'Quin wrote a favorable review about this film, and, taking my co-editor's advice, I used it in my Social Gerontology class. Let me add my own kudos to this film. It is an excellent piece that spurs discussion of numerous issues affecting older persons in society, including love, friendships, achievement in older ages, inter-generativity. Fantastic! Get it. Use it.

-- J. James Cotter

Videocaregiving.org: A Groundbreaking New Resource for Family Caregivers

There are approximately 50 million family caregivers in America providing over 80% of all of the long term care in this country. And the estimated value of family caregivers "free" caregiving services was more than \$375 BILLION dollars in 2007—more than the total Medicaid spending in 2007 (\$311 million) These caregivers are largely invisible, and part of a process that helps to prop up our nation's healthcare system.

www.videocaregiving.org is a new Web site that features streaming videos aimed at helping caregivers to better understand and deal with their situation, but also to remind them they are neither isolated or alone in their struggle. The videos on the Web site focus on real stories of real people in real circumstances. The videos are drawn from films either produced or distributed by Terra Nova Films. An advisory team of representatives from the leading caregiving organizations were involved in creating this resource. The 5-8 minute videos are simple, clear and to the point. Every video can be played by itself or alongside a text portion that summarizes the piece and offers information that takes the user "beyond the video."

The creation of videocaregiving.org was underwritten in part by the Retirement Research Foundation.

-- Jo Ann O'Quin

Calendar

Let me refer you to the GSA site that has information on numerous conferences and trainings available. You can filter by state and find out what events are near your location that you may want to attend.

<http://www.geron.org/Resources/Events%20Calendar>