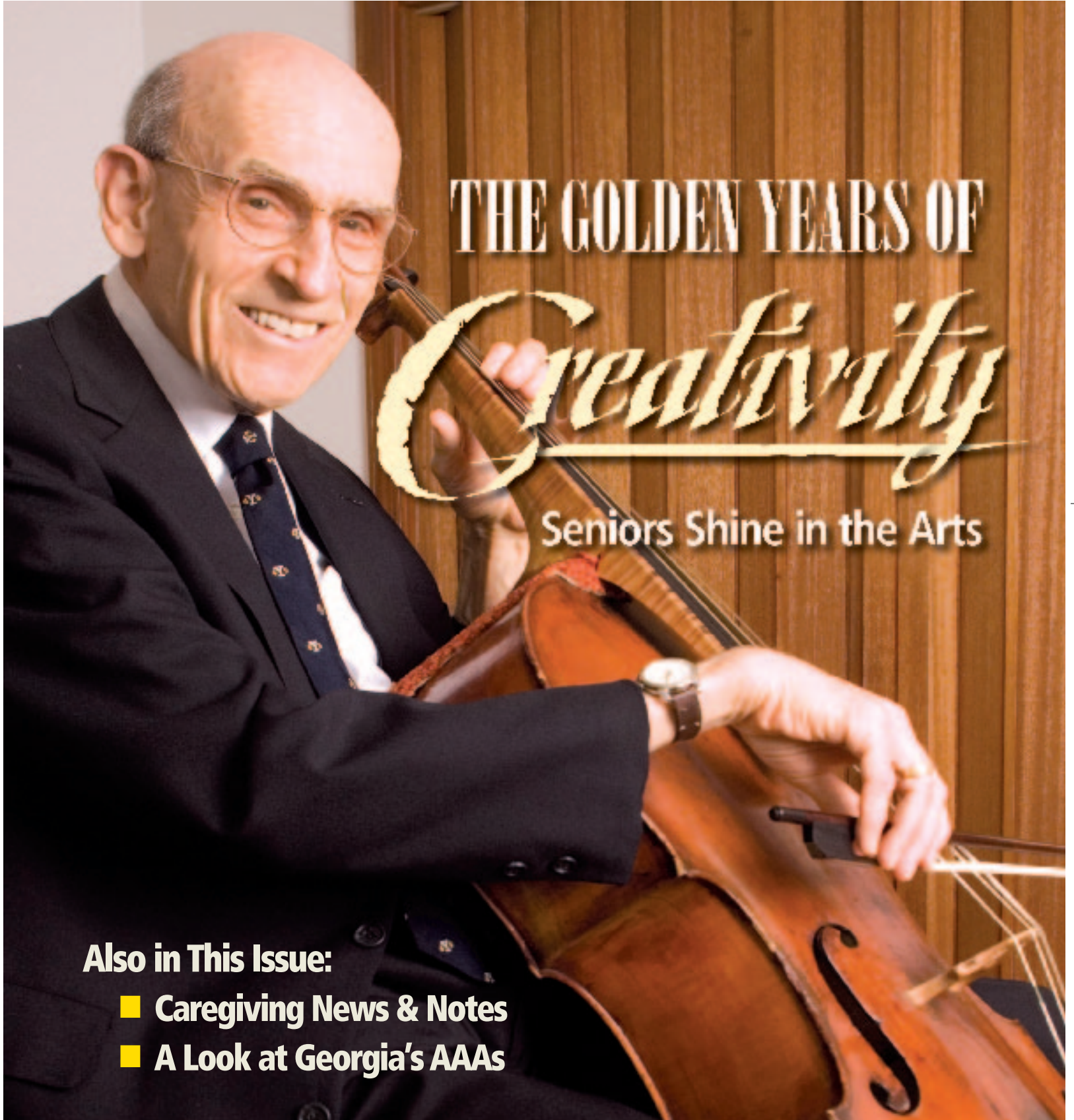


Georgia

Fall 2006

# Generations™



THE GOLDEN YEARS OF

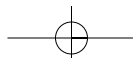
## *Creativity*

Seniors Shine in the Arts

**Also in This Issue:**

- Caregiving News & Notes
- A Look at Georgia's AAAs

Published quarterly by Georgia's Area Agencies on Aging



# Area Agencies on Aging – Gateways to Community Resources



Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) were established under the Older Americans Act in 1973 to respond to the needs of older adults age 60 and over in every community. To read more about each of Georgia's AAAs and the services available, turn to a statewide map and news from each agency, beginning on page 9.

Georgia is divided into 12 AAAs, each serving a different part of the state. They are:

- 1 Northwest Georgia
- 2 Legacy Link
- 3 Atlanta Regional Commission
- 4 Southern Crescent
- 5 Northeast Georgia
- 6 Lower Chattahoochee
- 7 Middle Georgia
- 8 Central Savannah River
- 9 Heart of Georgia Altamaha
- 10 Southwest Georgia
- 11 Southeast Georgia
- 12 Coastal Georgia

## Georgia Generations

**FALL 2006** Published quarterly through a cooperative effort of Georgia's Area Agencies on Aging.

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JAM Communications, Atlanta, GA

**Design and Production:**  
Wells-Smith Partners, Lilburn, GA

Georgia Generations is a:

2006 **JAM**  
National Mature  
Media Awards™  
*Winner*

**On the Cover:**

Eckhart Richter, professional cellist and founding member of the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, is living proof that creativity does not diminish with older age. In fact, Georgia seniors continue to celebrate their talents and contribute to their communities through a variety of art forms. It's a "win-win" for everyone. See story, page 4.

Cover and feature photography by Ben Brown.

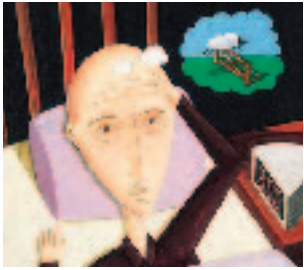
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## A Good Night's Sleep

Half of all older adults sleep fewer than seven hours a night, and a quarter of them say they have a sleep problem, according to a recent Gallup survey.

If you are the caregiver for a person who has trouble sleeping, here are several health conditions that could be contributing to the problem:

- Sleep apnea, an obstruction of the airway, which can cause a person to stop breathing repeatedly,
- Restless legs syndrome (RLS), which can cause leg "tingles,"



- REM behavior disorder, which can cause dream disturbances,
- Urinary problems, resulting in frequent trips to the bathroom,
- Medications such as antidepressants, decongestants or high blood pressure drugs, which can have a stimulating effect on the brain.

Be sure to review these conditions thoroughly with a doctor.

## Promising News on Prostate Treatment

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE who has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, you'll be interested to learn that some doctors are starting to use minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery to remove the prostate. Early research indicates this form of surgery may lead to less pain and shorter recovery times than conventional surgery.

## Surfing the Net

Each issue of *Georgia Generations* offers several Web sites devoted to caregiving information and resources:

[www.careplanner.org](http://www.careplanner.org) is a free Web site to help seniors and their caregivers choose between different living options. You will need to establish an account in order to use the site.

[www.familydoctor.org](http://www.familydoctor.org) provides in-depth health information from the American Academy of Family Physicians, including

medical conditions — from A to Z — plus health tips and easy-to-understand guides. Visitors can choose Spanish or English.

Look for more helpful Web sites in the next issue of *Georgia Generations*.



## CAREGIVING NEWS & NOTES

## WORRYING About Probate

It is surprising how many seniors or caregivers worry about "avoiding probate." In many cases, that concern is not justified — and it is frequently based on a misunderstanding of what "probate" means.

Often, the process of probating an estate is relatively quick and inexpensive. Unfortunately, for several years there have been efforts to portray the probate process as slow and expensive. Sometimes the people who make these claims are trying to convince the listener to hire them to create a so-called "living trust."

Although trust agreements are often a good way for seniors to plan their estates, they are not always necessary and usually involve higher fees up front. Individuals should always be concerned if the person trying to "sell them a trust" uses scare tactics about probate. This is especially true when the person selling the legal documents is not an attorney. The decision of whether a trust or will is appropriate should be something that is decided after consulting with a qualified attorney.



## Generations Wins National Award

*Georgia Generations* magazine has won a silver award in the 15th annual National Mature Media Awards Program. The program recognizes the nation's finest advertising, educational and marketing materials designed and produced for older adults.

The magazine was honored for two entries: "Senior Travelers Hit the Road" (Spring 2005) and "A Wealth of Help for Caregivers" (Fall 2005).

Nearly 1,200 entries were judged by a panel of mature market experts from across the United States for overall excellence of design, content, creativity and relevance to the senior market.

*Georgia Generations* is available to older adults and caregivers through the state's 12 Area Agencies on Aging.



## Protect Medicare and Medicaid Benefits

Report suspected fraud and errors.  
Call your Senior Medicare Patrol Project for details and to request a presentation.

Metro Atlanta: 404-463-0763  
Outside Metro Atlanta:  
GeorgiaCares 1-800-669-8387

# The Golden Years of

# Creativity

## Seniors Shine in the Arts

By Martha Nolan McKenzie

### WILFORD STROUD WAS A 26-YEAR-OLD

postal worker when he started a jazz band called AfroJazzTet. "I started it partly because I liked playing the music, but my main reason was to have a way to keep a group of us in shape and in contact so that when we got older, there would still be hope for us. We'd have something to do when we retired," says Stroud.

Things worked out exactly as Stroud planned. Now 76, the Macon musician and the band he founded still perform, albeit not with all the original members. And when he's not playing the piano, Stroud is painting. He began picking up a paintbrush after work when he was younger, and since retirement has devoted more time to his art. Now he sells portraits and displays his paintings in galleries and shows.

"Music and painting are therapy to me," says Stroud. "Playing music gets my heart pumping and my blood flowing. Painting helps me to relax and clears my mind. Together, they keep my mind, spirit and body in good shape."

Stroud knew instinctively what researchers are now documenting. Involvement with creative pursuits has enormous benefits for seniors —



emotionally, psychologically and even physically. A study by Dr. Gene Cohen, director of the Center on Aging, Health and Humanities at George Washington University, found that seniors who undertook artistic endeavors were less depressed and less lonely than those who did not participate. In addition, the elder artists fell less often, visited their doctors fewer times and downed fewer medications than non-artistic seniors. Whether it's painting, singing or writing, creative expression can promote social connections and intergenerational bonds. Art can



**Painter Ann Sample**

be the glue that keeps seniors connected and contributing.

And the benefits cut both ways. Seniors' artistic pursuits enrich society — through the art itself, as patrons of arts and as teachers of the next generation of artists.

"Seniors get so much out of their art," says Cindy Tandy, an associate professor of social work at Valdosta State University. "While I was getting my doctorate, I studied a group of elderly piano teachers — women in their 80s and 90s who were still actively

teaching. All but one were in excellent physical and mental health, and they credited their music for keeping them engaged and active. On the flip side, society benefits from having piano teachers with that wealth of experience and wisdom to nurture a new generation of pianists."

### "Big C" and "little c"

Creativity can be divided into two types — Creativity with a "big C," such as professional musicians and published poets, and creativity with a "little c," such as the person who makes ceramic creations purely for his own enjoyment. Each type can be equally beneficial.

Evelyn Kukla loves the discipline required and the adrenaline rush of performing. For the past 27 years, the 70-plus-year-old Warner Robins woman has been singing baritone with a chorus called Wings of Harmony, which is a chapter of Sweet Adelines International. The barbershop-style a capella chorus competes annually at the regional level in Georgia and throughout the Southeast. Over the years, her chorus has entertained audiences in Austria, France and, most recently, Ireland.

"We sing four-part unaccompanied harmony," says Kukla. "So every note has to be correct and in tune. When you are onstage and feel the ring of the chords and harmony that you know is right, well, there's just nothing else like it!"

Kukla credits the joy of performing and the demands of learning new music and new choreography with keeping her and other senior chorus members fit and happy. "In our chorus of 30 members, there are about six of us who have been performing with 'The Wings' pretty much from the beginning," she says. "None of us has any big health problems. We don't sit around and talk about aches and pains. We don't have the time."

But the spotlight isn't for everyone. Creating art can be just as beneficial to those who do it solely for their own enjoyment. Bill Jefferson has always dabbled in a variety of artistic pursuits — carving, wood turning, mosaics, metal work. About 10 years ago, he retired from his career as a real estate agent in north Atlanta and began to devote more time to his art. Now 75,

Jefferson has built a reputation as a skilled wood turner that reaches beyond his home in Cherry Log, and he has started to sell some of his creations.

Even so, Jefferson is content to create purely for his own pleasure. "Every week, I have a different favorite thing to work on," says Jefferson. "I don't want to make 8 or 10 of the same thing. I create something once and move on. This is a hobby for me, not a job. Something will just pop into my head and I'll say, 'I wonder if I can do that in wood.' Then I go out and try it. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. When it does, I get a real sense of accomplishment for having created something. It satisfies a need inside of me."

### Ages and stages of creativity

While seniors may be subject to other losses, the ability to create does not diminish with age. In fact, experience, perspective and freedom from work constraints can enhance creative expression. And even if you've never picked up a paintbrush or tickled the ivories, it's never too late to begin. David Myers found that not only can you teach old dogs new tricks, but those old dogs learn them at least as well as the young pups. Associate director of the School of Music at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Myers conducted a study to learn more about musical learning in older adults.

"We found that older adults are efficient learners as long as you accommodate for developmental characteristics, such as the beginnings of arthritis or visual or auditory declines," says Myers. "When those are accommodated for, older adults are equal to and sometimes better than younger and middle-aged adults at learning to play music."

Gerontologist Cohen has identified four developmental stages that shape the way our creative energy grows and the way we express it:

#### MIDLIFE REEVALUATION PHASE.

"During this time, creative expression is shaped by a sense of crisis or quest," writes Cohen in *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life*. "Midlife is a powerful time for the expression of human

potential," he explains, "because it combines the capacity for insightful reflection with a powerful desire to create meaning in life." In this stage, people tend to look for ways to make their lives and work more gratifying and meaningful.

Julia Evatt somehow found time between working full-time and raising four children to write and publish poetry. For years, her poetry satisfied her creative need. But when her children grew up and her husband passed away, Evatt felt she needed a change.

At the age of 60, Evatt enrolled in North Georgia College and studied fine art and literature. "I had always wanted to sculpt, but I never had the time," says Evatt, who is now 76 and lives in Ellijay. "When I went back to college, I found I had a real feel for it."

Evatt sculpted a bust of Zell Miller when he was governor, and from there "the commissions just started rolling in." Evatt has done busts of several college presidents and figurative sculptures that have been shown in galleries and art museums.

"My art keeps my mind going," she says. "There is an old word that is now obsolete — 'opsimathy.' It means late learning. Actually doing anything new can retrain the currents in the brain and keep the mind going. I know it's done that for me."

**LIBERATION PHASE.** Creative endeavors in this phase are shaped by a new level of personal



*Singer Jannie Streetman*

freedom that comes both psychologically from within and externally through retirement, according to Cohen. People in this phase tend to feel comfortable with themselves and don't mind experimenting or taking a risk with their art, since their sense of self-worth is firmly established.

Indeed, retirement provided Eckhart Richter the freedom to pursue his interest in performing baroque music. Until 1995, Richter taught music at Georgia State's School of Music and performed as a professional cellist. Once he was free of the demands of his post, he became one of the founding members of the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, which performs 17th- and 18th-century music on period instruments. Richter plays baroque and classical cello in this orchestra and is currently serving as president of the orchestra's Board of Directors. The group performs five concerts a year as well as various out-of-town engagements.

"I've been interested in early music since my days as a student of Paul Hindemith at Yale," says Richter, 80. "I've just never had time to specialize in it. Now I've got the time and I'm enjoying it. I'm also able to pursue other interests — I'm writing music and researching and writing articles. I'm also still singing in the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus, of which I've been a member since 1988."

**SUMMING UP PHASE.** The desire to find a larger meaning in life and to give something back characterizes creativity in this phase. "In the role of 'keepers of the culture,' the lessons and fortunes of a lifetime are shared through autobiography and personal storytelling, philanthropy, community activism and volunteerism," writes Cohen.

Bettie Sellers is certainly giving back. The 80-year-old Young Harris woman has achieved artistic success by any measure. Sellers, who didn't begin writing poetry until she was 40, has published volumes of her poetry, been named Georgia poet



*Wood turner Bill Jefferson*

laureate by then-Governor Zell Miller and received state, regional and national awards. "I am very happy and very contented with what I have done and where I have been," says Sellers.

And though she still enjoys penning a new poem, her passion has become teaching others the language of poetry. She instructs seniors in a variety of continuing education classes and talks to children at local elementary schools.

"I think if I really made an evaluative statement of my life, what I really am is a teacher, and I'm a good one," says Sellers. "I can make people appreciate and love poetry. There is a certain amount of talent in being able to communicate the beauty of language to others, and that is my greatest pleasure."

**ENCORE PHASE.** "This is the time of advancing age, in which creative expression is shaped by the desire to make strong, lasting contributions on a personal or community level, to affirm life, take care of unfinished business and celebrate one's own contribution," writes Cohen.

Others characterize this phase as the "Swan Song" phenomenon. "There

is a whole area of research around the fact that many elders become highly creative later in life, when there is a kind of reconnection of the intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of life," says Georgia State's Myers. "The arts seem to be a perfect way to draw all that together."

At 85, Ann Sample has not lost her zest for painting. Or for entertaining. Or for keeping up with current events. Or for attending concerts and sporting events. "I'm really very driven, and I always have been," says Sample.

One of the things that used to drive the Roswell artist was sales. "My paint-

theaters, church groups and medical centers. She painted a turtle to benefit the Sandy Springs Society, a local non-profit. She has donated time, painting instruction and paintings to Bullock Hall, a historic home in Roswell.

### A win-win for everyone

Creative expression in any phase of life carries enormous benefits both for the individual and for society. For one thing, art can be the bridge that connects generations. Valdosta State's Tandy recalls long afternoons sitting beside her grandmother learning how to crochet. "She taught me how to make all sorts of beautiful things, and it became a real bond between us," says Tandy. "I think a lot of people have experiences like that, where grandparents can teach grandchildren some of their creative talents."

Singing is one way Jannie Streetman stays connected with her son, a professional guitarist. The 81-year-old Augusta woman occasionally performs with her son — she accompanied him as a soloist recently in New Hampshire. "I don't think I can say my singing keeps me younger — I'd sing more if it did," she says. "But it makes me happy to be able to make other people smile. And it makes me smile. If I gave up performing, I'd sing around the house. I'll never stop singing."

Art can also be a bridge to connect with others in the community. Jeanne Nelson Szabo credits her art with helping her to begin a new life when she moved to St. Simons from New York. A painter, gallery owner and painting instructor, Szabo used art and teaching duplicate bridge to establish a new circle of friends in her new home. "I make a lot of friends with people who come to the studio for instruction or who come to the gallery," says Szabo, 80. "It's the core of my life right now. I love it."

Creative expression can also help bring someone through a loss or adversity. "It's part of the human condition," says Cohen. "Loss and adversity push people to discover other aspects of themselves, and that might be a creative aspect."

It was the loss of her husband that spurred Evatt to return to school and

pursue sculpting. Painting helped Sample through the loss of her oldest child and her husband. And writing poetry was good therapy for Sellers when she was going through a divorce. "I was in turmoil, but writing about it helped me see who I was as an individual person."

All members of the community benefit from Streetman's singing, and Szabo's painting, and Sellers' writing — from the depth of experience of any older artist. Musician Daniel Pyle sees this clearly in the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra. Pyle, the orchestra's resident director, explains, "There is a different kind of depth to the performance of older musicians that just comes with years of experience. Eckhart Richter, for example, has worked with or studied under some of the greatest musicians in the 20th century. He brings all that to his performance."

## "Elders who share their creativity are really giving back to society in terms of our aesthetic and spiritual needs."

The older musicians also act as role models and mentors to the younger members of the orchestra. Again, Pyle cites Richter. "Eckhart could very well have said, 'I've played classical cello all my life and that's what I will continue to do.' Instead, he wanted to explore and try something new — playing baroque cello. That is very inspiring to the younger musicians to see someone like Eckhart exploring new areas."

Ultimately, older artists enrich even beyond their performances or finished canvasses. "Elders who share their creativity are really giving back to society in terms of our aesthetic and spiritual needs," says Georgia State's Myers. "Some of them continue to teach. They support art institutions. They engage other people around them in the artistic experience. All of this goes toward contributing to a better society." **GG**



**Jazz pianist Wilford Stroud**

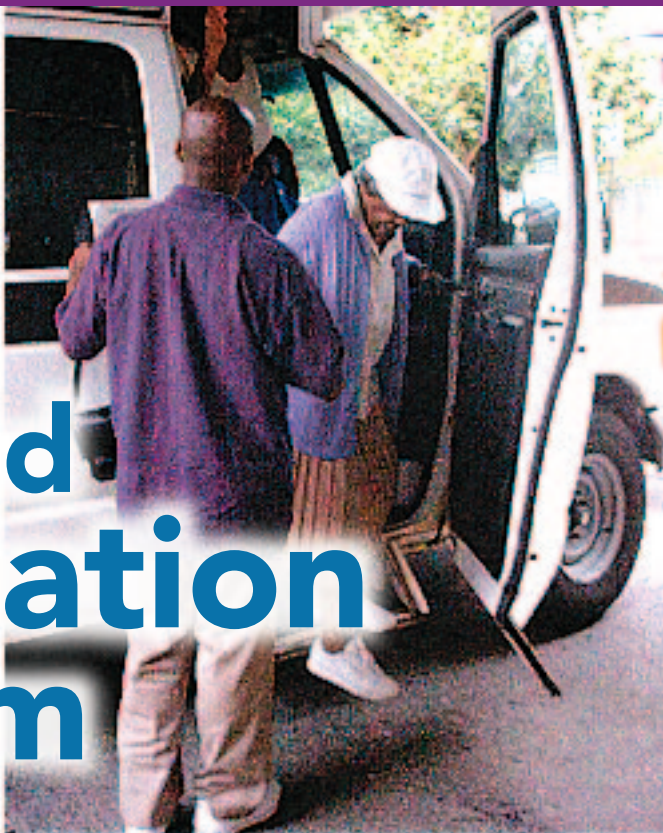
ings have sold well all my life," she says. "And I used to paint to sell, and to show in galleries and such. Now I don't really care. Now I just enjoy the process."

And she enjoys using her art to help the community. She paints artwork to be used in flyers for arts alliances,

## GUEST CLOSE-UP

Georgia  
Department of  
Human Resources

# Coordinated Transportation System



*A passenger is offered assistance exiting a DHR Coordinated Transportation System vehicle.*

*By Leigh Ann Trainer, Unit Chief, Georgia Department of Human Resources  
Transportation Services Section*

Nearly one million one-way trips provided to just over 100 elderly clients in a one-year period: That sounds like a lot of available transportation, but it is really just a drop in the bucket when we compare need to availability. Recent needs assessments conducted by the Transportation Services Section of the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) and an independent consultant with the Georgia Department of Transportation found that only one-third of the total transportation service needs of the elderly statewide were being met.

The DHR operates a comprehensive coordinated transportation system to serve the clients of DHR. The system serves elderly, poor or disadvantaged individuals, those with mental health problems or those with developmental disabilities. Clearly, additional resources are required to meet the needs of current clients, as well as the increasing number of elderly persons who will enter the system in the coming years as the over-60 population grows.

Many older adults lose the capacity to drive as they age or become disabled. Without adequate transportation, their access services, capability to perform activities of daily living and ability to go to the store or doctor or senior center become limited. Lack of transportation services prevents many elderly and disabled simply from accessing critical services that they need to maintain independence and self-sufficiency. Transportation is the key component for many seniors to become

less reliant on government and achieve or maintain a level of self-determination needed to live independently.

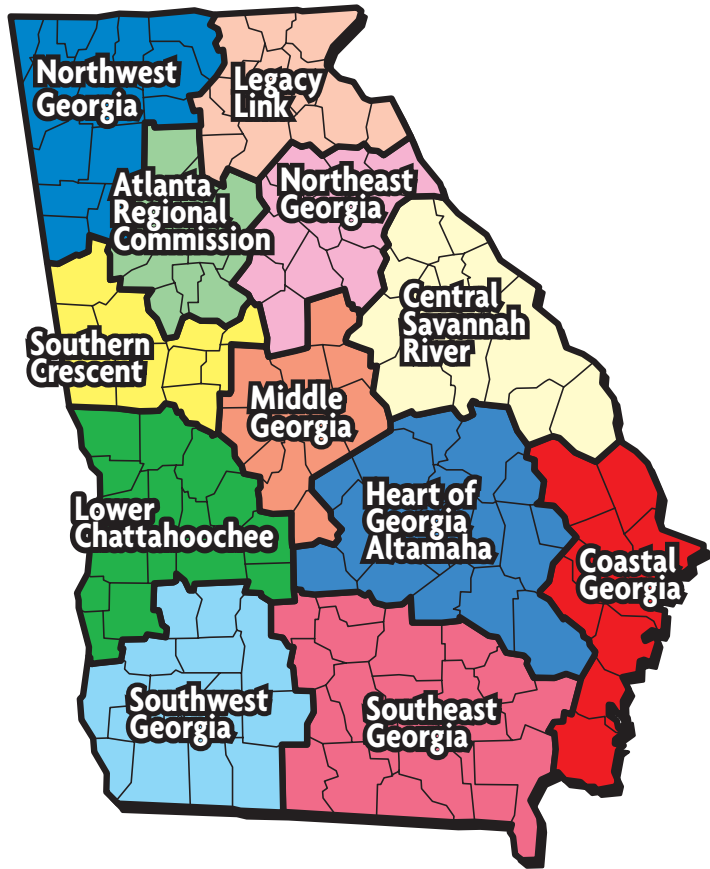
DHR's Coordinated Transportation System changed traditional service delivery methods. The system emulates a business rather than a government model in service delivery. Transportation providers are a mix of governmental entities, for-profit companies and private nonprofit organizations, and services are provided to clients "on-demand." There are no predetermined fixed routes; each transportation provider devises routes on a day-to-day basis, based on who needs transportation each day. Services are specialized and offer more than traditional public transportation, such as assistance getting on and off the vehicle. The staff works with clients to determine eligibility; eligible clients are then registered with the Coordinated Transportation System.

In addition, DHR is exploring new systems and technologies. Smart cards, a Web-based trip tracking system, variable payment reimbursement, vouchers and partnerships with Georgia DOT to expand public systems are a few of the concepts under review. Also, DHR and DOT are partnering on two demonstration projects in the state to expand rural public transportation options. A third project is under development. However, these pilots rely on the availability of sufficient funding.

There remain unmet needs for additional services statewide, as evidenced by the recent needs assessments. All population groups depend on reliable transportation, but for the elderly and disabled throughout Georgia it is a critical lifeline to independent living. **GG**

# A Look at Area Agencies on Aging Around Georgia

In communities across the country, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) serve as gateways to local resources, planning efforts and services that help older adults remain independent. On the following pages are the programs and services offered by Georgia's AAAs.



## Northwest Georgia

Covers a 15-county area surrounding Rome, Dallas, Dalton, Cartersville

### Update on Alzheimer's treatment, resources

Although a great deal of research is being done to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease, the only treatments so far are drugs that prevent or delay the symptoms for a limited time. While there is no cure, by delaying or preventing the symptoms of Alzheimer's, the patients may be able to do things for themselves for a longer period of time, thus offering them more dignity and independence. This also benefits the caregivers.

There are currently five prescription drugs on the market that have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of Alzheimer's. Four are prescribed for the treatment of mild to moderate Alzheimer's: Razadyne® (formerly Reminyl®), Exelon®,



Nearly half of Americans over age 85 may have Alzheimer's disease, but 97-year-old Myrtice McDaniel of Chickamauga is one of those who has "dodged the bullet" and is continuing to enjoy life.

Aricept® and Cognex® (which is no longer actively marketed by the manufacturer). The

fifth, Namenda®, is prescribed for moderate to severe Alzheimer's. None of these drugs should be stopped suddenly, as this can cause mental or behavioral changes.

To learn more about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, go online to the National Institutes of Health at [www.alzheimers.org](http://www.alzheimers.org) or the Alzheimer's Association at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). The Alzheimer's Association offers many direct services to patients and their families. Your Area Agency on Aging can give you phone numbers of contacts for Alzheimer's services.

For other information, contact the AAA of Northwest Georgia, P.O. Box 1793, Rome, GA 30162-1793; 706-802-5506 or toll-free 1-800-759-2963.

#### NORTHWEST GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:

Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker, Whitfield

# Atlanta Regional Commission

Covers a 10-county area surrounding Atlanta

## Kinship programs support caregivers

Have you noticed the word **kinship** appearing in the media lately or popping up in conversation? Ever wonder what it means? The word **kinship** refers to the relationship among family members and the extended family. It has the root “kin,” which has been an endearing term that Southerners have used to identify family members. Recently, the word **kinship** has been linked with the word **caregiver** to identify grandparents, step-grandparents or other adults related by birth or marriage who provide care for a minor child.

Before 2000, the U.S. Census did not include statistics on relatives caring for minor children. Now that the data is available, many are surprised to learn just how many relatives have “stepped up to the plate,” often sacrificing their plans for retirement, to care for children in need.

There are 164,423 children in Georgia living in grandparent-headed households (7.6 percent of all children in the state). There are another 53,785 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.5 percent of all children in the state)\*. The combined total for the two groups of

children exceeds 10 percent of Georgia’s minor children under the age of 18.

To meet the needs of kinship caregivers, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is collaborating with community partners to develop supportive resources and services. In 2005, ARC produced the *Grandparent Resource Guide for the Atlanta Region* with funds from the Brookdale Foundation and the Georgia Department of Human Resources Aging Services Division (DHR). AARP generously donated the printing of the first resource guides and just completed a second printing. In addition, ARC added a new category, “Grandparenting Services,” to the statewide database of services for older adults and caregivers. Kinship caregivers can now access both the resource guides and the database by calling 404-463-3333, the AgeWise Connection.

Last year Governor Sonny Perdue helped raise community awareness of kinship caregivers by allocating state funds for

kinship programs across the state, utilizing the network of Area Agencies on Aging for the implementation. ARC contracted with four agencies to offer kinship care services ranging from community education, support groups, information and assistance to counseling, legal assistance, material aid and respite. (See agencies identified in box, below.)

The Clayton County Aging Program

### Kinship Care Programs in the Atlanta Region

#### Clayton Kinship Care Resource Center

Angie Burda .....770-477-3417

#### Institute for the Study of Disadvantage and Disability

Janice Nodvin .....678-595-4854

#### Project Healthy Grandparents — GSU

Judy Perdue .....404-651-0341

#### Rockdale County Kinship Program

established the first Atlanta region Kinship Care Resource Center in Jonesboro in 2004. With the new state funding, they are able to serve younger kinship caregivers and offer vouchers for summer camp for the children. Project Healthy Grandparents, which serves Fulton and DeKalb counties, has expanded their work into Henry County. The Institute for the Study of Disadvantage and Disability began a support group and individual counseling for relatives caring for children with developmental disabilities. Rockdale County started a support group and began offering respite vouchers and material aid vouchers.

For additional information, call Mary Lou Vergara, ARC’s caregiver program coordinator, at 404-463-3524 or email Mary Lou at [mvergara@atlantaregional.com](mailto:mvergara@atlantaregional.com).

**ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:** Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Rockdale

\* Statistical data was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics: 2000.



Atlanta Regional Commission 404-463-3333

#### If you need caregiving information, contact an AgeWise Connection partner:

**Cherokee County** Cherokee County Senior Services, 770-345-5312

**Clayton County** Clayton County Aging Program, 770-603-4050

**Cobb County** Cobb Senior Services, 770-528-5364

**DeKalb County** Office of Senior Affairs, 404-687-7117

**Douglas County** Douglas Senior Services, 770-489-3100

**Fayette County** Fayette Senior Services, 770-461-0813

**Fulton County** Fulton County Aging Program, 404-730-6000

**Gwinnett County** Gwinnett County Senior Services, 678-377-4150

**Henry County** Henry County Senior Services, 770-898-7670

**Rockdale County** Rockdale County Senior Services, 770-922-4633

## Northeast Georgia

Covers a 12-county area surrounding Athens, Winder, Monroe, Covington, Madison

### Annual festival brings seniors and schoolchildren together

For more than 30 years, the Northeast Georgia Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), administered by the Athens Community Council on Aging, has co-sponsored with Clarke County Leisure Services an annual Harvest Festival that serves as an educational field trip for local schoolchildren. As many as 1,200 children (primarily second and third graders) arrive in their school buses and embark on an excursion into a nineteenth-century world.

Nearly 100 senior volunteers staff exhibits where they demonstrate hand-washing laundry, soap making, vegetable canning, knitting, crocheting, quilt making, taffy pulling, chair caning, butter churning, wood carving, making cornhusk dolls and

wooden toys, spinning and weaving, American Indian crafts of the era and much more. Musicians and

volunteers dressed in period clothing circulate through the exhibits, and storytellers spin tales of life from a time that the children can barely imagine.

Major highlights of the day are always the farm animal exhibits, where children can witness life-sustaining activities such as shearing sheep or milking cows. Recently the festival has added a beekeeper and a



RSVP volunteers enjoy their day of demonstrating turn-of-the-century crafts and skills like food canning.

miniature goat breeder.

This event is absolutely free for the children and the adults who accompany them.

For information about volunteering at the festival, contact the Northeast

Georgia RSVP office at 706-549-4850 or [volunteers@accaging.org](mailto:volunteers@accaging.org).

For information about caregiving, contact the Northeast Georgia AAA, 305 Research Drive, Athens, GA 30605; 706-369-5650 or toll-free 1-800-474-7540.

#### NORTHEAST GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:

Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Walton

## Lower Chattahoochee

Covers a 16-county area surrounding Columbus, Americus, Butler, Montezuma, Cuthbert

### New program promotes more fruits and vegetables

The Lower Chattahoochee Area Agency on Aging is partnering with West Central Health District Nutrition Services in a farmers market for Columbus residents age 60 and above. This program is



Seniors at the E. J. Knight Senior Center shop with a local Georgia farmer.

part of the "Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition" pilot program that was implemented in five regions in Georgia this year.

The model is very similar to the WIC program (Women, Infants and Children).

Georgia farmers enrolled and were trained by the Division of Public Health. Seniors in social and economic need were targeted to participate. Senior high-rise apartments, assisted-living facilities and senior centers were sites in which the farmers brought their Georgia-grown produce. Each participant received \$20 worth of vouchers for the fresh produce.

The Lower Chattahoochee

AAA is very excited about the program in that we are teaching the value of healthy eating. Since the new food pyramid has added servings of fruits and vegetables to our daily diet, it could not be better timing. When surveyed, many seniors said that they would eat more fruits and vegetables if the produce were more affordable and transportation were available. Now we have the opportunity to fund a program that has enabled 425 seniors to practice healthy eating without the worry of cost and transportation.

For further information, contact the Lower Chattahoochee AAA, P.O. Box 1908, Columbus, GA 31902-1908; 706-256-2900 or toll-free 1-800-615-4379.

#### LOWER CHATTAHOOCHEE ENCOMPASSES THESE

COUNTIES: Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, Webster

## Heart of Georgia Altamaha

Covers a 17-county area surrounding Baxley, Dublin, Vidalia, Jesup, Swainsboro

### Lifelong Planning for caregivers

In 2005, the GeorgiaCares program implemented Lifelong Planning to increase public awareness of long-term care needs, escalating costs of long-term care, limitations of public funding for long-term care and various private financial options to meet future needs.

According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), nearly two-thirds of Americans will need long-term care and one of four people are currently long-term caregivers for friends or relatives. Increased life



Laura Graham, Lifelong Planning Coordinator at the Heart of Georgia Altamaha AAA.

expectancies, rising health care costs and limited public funding make it imperative that everyone plan for future long-term care needs.

Since caregivers have experience with long-term care needs and costs, they are key to the evolution of lifelong planning. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha AAA is committed to empowering caregivers with knowledge about lifelong planning and to providing tools

to assist them in planning for long-term care needs. To increase public awareness of the importance of lifelong planning, the AAA sponsors group education and individual counseling at community events, support groups, local hospitals and family councils of long-term care facilities. The Lifelong Planning program partners with the CARE-NET Collaborative to identify and address the needs of caregivers, develop better services and improve lives of professional and family caregivers throughout the region.

For further information, contact Heart of Georgia Altamaha RDC, 331 W. Parker St., Baxley, GA 31513; 912-367-3648 or toll-free 1-888-367-9913.

#### HEART OF GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:

Appling, Bleckley, Candler, Dodge, Emanuel, Evans, Jeff Davis, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Tattall, Telfair, Toombs, Treutlen, Wayne, Wheeler, Wilcox

## Southeast Georgia

Covers an 18-county area surrounding Waycross, Valdosta, Tifton, Douglas, Folkston

### SEGa AAA receives \$45,000 GANE grant from Georgia DCH

The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) has approved a grant for the Southeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging (SEGa AAA) for "Generating Active Elders through Nutrition Education" (GANE). The funds will allow SEGa AAA to expand its "Live Healthy Georgia: Seniors Taking Charge!" program.

SEGa AAA has selected three senior centers in the region to participate in the program. These centers represent the greatest number of seniors who are African American, are low-income and are frail and vulnerable. Utilizing the University of Georgia Department of Foods and Nutrition's Community Intervention Study Toolkit, SEGa AAA staff will conduct pre-

and post-tests for diabetics and non-diabetics, diabetes education, lessons on fruits and vegetables, healthy cooking demonstrations and age-appropriate exercise sessions.

At the conclusion of the project, the SEGa AAA believes that it will see a substantial increase in daily physical activity among the seniors at the three centers. Also, the participating



SEGa AAA's program will stress portion control and the importance of fruits and vegetables.

seniors are expected to report a marked increase in their consumption of fruits and vegetables. As for the diabetic older adults taking part in the program, the staff expects improved blood glucose control. A summary of the project results will be prepared in February 2007.

For more information, call the Southeast Georgia AAA at 1725 South Georgia Parkway West, Waycross, GA 31503; 912-285-6097 or toll-free 1-888-732-4464.

#### SOUTHEAST GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES

THESE COUNTIES:

Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner, Ware

## Legacy Link

Covers a 13-county area surrounding Gainesville, Cumming, Clarkesville, Toccoa, Hiawassee

### Senior center “steps out” into community

The Habersham County Senior Center has taken their walking program to the people. The senior center teamed up with Habersham County Parks and Recreation Department and Tugaloo Home Health Agency in May 2005 to provide a walking program that shows the results of dedication to living healthy, active lives.

Seniors from the senior center, recreation center and local parks are encouraged to track the miles walked. Monthly clinics at the Ruby Fulbright Aquatic Center provide walkers with health screenings and physical fitness assessments. Lisa Howard, wellness coordinator for Legacy Link, provides an educational session for participants, focusing on walking and exer-



Members of the Habersham Half-Fast Walking Club (left to right): Ann Tallent, Winnie Cheek, Lynn Morgan and Mildred Ellison.

cise tips and eating for health. Legacy Link, Habersham County Parks and Recreation Department and Tugaloo Home Health Agency offer incentives to Habersham

Half-Fast Walking Club participants for the specific number of miles walked.

More than 140 participants have benefited from this partnership, with weight loss and decreased blood pressure. Community participation in wellness activities has increased at the Habersham County Senior Center; more seniors are participating in programs at the Ruby Fulbright Aquatic Center, and Tugaloo Home Health Agency has a community walking program they can recommend to their clients — a win-win situation for all.

For more information about the Walking Club, call 706-776-7770.

For information, contact Legacy Link, P.O. Box 2534, Gainesville, GA 30503-2534; 770-538-2650 or toll-free 1-800-845-LINK.

**LEGACY LINK ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:** Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, White

## Southern Crescent

Covers a 10-county area surrounding Franklin, Newnan, LaGrange, Griffin, Carrollton

### Elder rights team sponsors awareness fashion shows

The Elder Rights Team at the Southern Crescent Area Agency on Aging (SCAAA) sponsored two special fashion shows in May during Older Americans Month. The “models” wore uniforms of various agencies — law enforcement, firefighters and more — and gave the seniors tips on what to ask for if an unknown person comes to their door. The two events reached 700 seniors.

Elder Rights Team members stress the importance of being aware of people in the community and scams that prey on seniors. The fashion show goal was to increase awareness of fraud and abuse that occur when people misrepresent themselves to



Fashion show participants get ready to model official uniforms.

gain access to seniors' homes.

Fashion show participants included police, sheriff, firefighters, EMTs, ambulance staff, UPS, BellSouth, security companies and utility workers from cable, electric, gas and water departments. They modeled official uniforms and identification badges to

educate seniors about becoming victims of fraud and abuse.

The Southern Crescent Elder Rights Team meets bimonthly at the Newnan Coweta Senior Center. Membership includes staff from GeorgiaCares, Ombudsmen, Adult Protective Services, Community Care Services Program Care Management, Georgia Legal Services Elderly Legal Assistance Program and the Area Agency on Aging deputy director. The group hosts annual events to bring awareness of elder abuse, exploitation and neglect into our communities.

For additional information, contact the Southern Crescent AAA, P.O. Box 1600, Franklin, GA 30217-1600; 706-675-6721, 770-854-6026 or toll-free 1-866-854-5652.

**SOUTHERN CRESCENT ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:** Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, Troup, Upson

## Middle Georgia

Covers an 11-county area surrounding Macon, Warner Robins, Milledgeville

### Male caregiver forums offer inspiration

Two forums were held recently to “support male caregivers in Middle Georgia — one in Milledgeville and one in Warner Robins. The seminars were sponsored by the Middle Georgia RDC/Area Agency on Aging, Oconee Regional Medical Center, Houston Healthcare, Middle Georgia CARE-NET, the Methodist Home for Children and Youth and the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving.

Coach Billy Henderson was interviewed at both forums as a caregiver for his wife of 59 years after she was diagnosed with dementia. Before becoming her caregiver, Henderson was football coach at Clarke Central High School in Athens, three-time state champion. Ed Grisamore, a columnist



Coach Billy Henderson (left) with Ed Grisamore (right) at a male caregiver forum.

for the *Macon Telegraph* who wrote a biography of Coach Henderson titled *It Can Be Done*, conducted a one-on-one interview for the audience.

Male caregiver panelists shared their experiences at each forum. Ed Grisamore moderated a question-and-answer session with the panelists, which was geared toward their roles as caregivers.

One of these caregivers was Mr. Holley Cowan, who is the primary caregiver for his wife. He explained that when you become a husband caregiver the traditional male/female roles disappear. You cook. You clean. You keep your head up. “I’ve got to take care of myself so I can take care of her.”

For more information on future caregiver forums or support groups, contact Natalie Brown, Caregiver Specialist at the Middle Georgia RDC/Area Agency on Aging, at 478-751-6509 or email [nbrown@mgrdc.org](mailto:nbrown@mgrdc.org).

**MIDDLE GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:** Baldwin, Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs, Wilkinson

## Central Savannah River

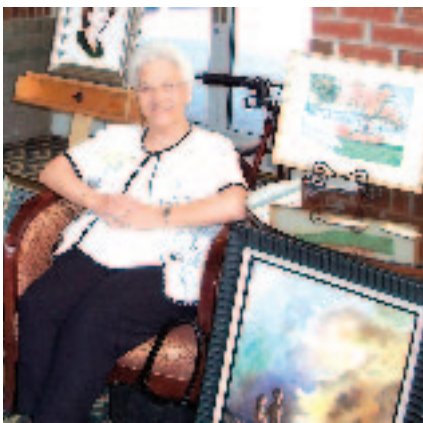
Covers a 14-county area surrounding Augusta, Thomson, Martinez/Evans, Waynesboro, Sandersville

### Ageless Artists class

**Ageless Artists** Dorothy Goodwin and Peggy Owens enjoy drawing and painting almost as much as they enjoy the camaraderie in their art class offered through the Augusta-Richmond County Recreation and Parks Department. In addition to providing an outlet for older adults to express their creativity, the class gives them opportunities for socialization and interaction with others.

“My husband is ill and this is my only out,” reports Goodwin as she paints a bluebird. She maintains that family is important but that seniors also need contact with other individuals who share common interests or hobbies.

For these two ladies, and the 25 others who participate in the **Ageless Artists**



**Ageless Artists** such as Erluth McArthur (shown above) display their work at the DHR Healthy Aging Summit.

class, painting and drawing have been invaluable. “I don’t know what I would do without this group,” reports one artist who painted alone for several years. She routinely struggled with depression but

was able to join the group when the class schedule changed. She now finds support from the other artists.

It is easy to see the social benefits of the group, but the class members come to learn new techniques and practice their art. “Besides,” comments Goodwin, “we are learning a lot. Painting keeps our minds active, in addition to filling our emotional needs.”

The **Ageless Artists** class is open to all ages and meets Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Minnick Park Recreation Center.

For more information, contact the CSRA Regional Development Center Area Agency on Aging at 706-210-2000 or 888-922-4464 or [www.areaagencyonaging.com](http://www.areaagencyonaging.com).

**CENTRAL SAVANNAH RIVER ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:** Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Screven, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, Wilkes

## Southwest Georgia

Covers a 14-county area surrounding Albany, Bainbridge, Moultrie, Thomasville

### New visions for the Southwest Georgia CARE-NET

The Southwest Georgia CARE-NET, under the auspices of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, is now entering its fifth year of existence as a coalition of both professional and family caregivers in the 14-county area of Southwest Georgia.

The Southwest Georgia CARE-NET works as "a circle of support for caregivers, ever adapting to changing needs." Its mission is to develop the network of professional and family caregivers to support and empower other caregivers through education (workshops), advocacy (town hall meetings), communication, reduction of barriers, resource development, information and referral, pro-active planning and providing other tools as identified and needed.



*Dr. Rick Birkel, executive director of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, and Anne Stokes, CARE-NET member and also coordinator for Dougherty for Children, discuss issues facing caregivers at the caregiver retreat held in Camilla, Georgia.*

At a recent retreat to review and renew our vision, members of the CARE-NET

looked to the future and the impending crisis that will be brought on by a dramatic increase in the population of older Americans as the number of professional caregivers continues to drop. At the same time, people with disabilities are living longer due to better medical care. They, too, will need caregivers. The CARE-NET in Southwest Georgia is taking on the challenge to increase awareness, to seek and develop solutions and to influence their implementation.

For further information, contact the Southwest Georgia Area Agency on Aging at 1105 Palmyra Road, Albany, GA 31701-2508; 229-432-1124 or toll-free 1-800-282-6612.

#### **SOUTHWEST GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:**

Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas, Worth

## Coastal Georgia

Covers a 9-county area surrounding Brunswick and Savannah

### Coastal Georgia AAA expands information services

The Coastal Area Agency on Aging is now offering expanded Information and Assistance services for seniors, those with developmental disabilities and their caregivers. By calling **1-800-580-6860**, individuals will reach trained Information and Assistance specialists at the Coastal Georgia AAA who can connect them to information and resources from a database of over 2,000 local programs, businesses and facilities serving Coastal Georgia, and more than 18,000



*Coastal Georgia AAA Information and Assistance Specialist Peggy Luukkonen provides information to a caller using resources in the Enhanced Services Program (ESP) database.*

#### **Enhanced Services Program (ESP)**

database contains specific information on such unusual topics as pet care services for seniors, service animal programs, programs

services across the state.

This information covers a broad spectrum, ranging from health care services to recreational pursuits. In addition to basic elder care services, the

seeking senior volunteers and resources for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

Caregivers in Coastal Georgia, as well as long-distance caregivers from all over the United States, are frequent callers. Now that ESP has been expanded to include services for those with disabilities and special assistance for grandparents, coastal residents will have access to more information and referral options.

The Coastal Georgia Area Agency on Aging is committed to continuing to expand its services to inform and assist our region's rapidly growing senior population, as well as those with disabilities and their caregivers.

For Information and Assistance, call 1-800-580-6860.

#### **COASTAL GEORGIA ENCOMPASSES THESE COUNTIES:**

Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn,

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## GeorgiaCares

GeorgiaCares is a private public partnership that assists Medicare beneficiaries with health insurance questions and Medicare problems. GeorgiaCares also seeks to enroll all eligible Medicare beneficiaries in all low-cost prescription assistance programs. For assistance please call 1-800-669-8387.



## Georgia Council on Aging

The Georgia Council on Aging advocates on behalf of older Georgians and their families. For more information, please visit the Web site at [www.gcoa.org](http://www.gcoa.org)



## Isakson-Barnhart

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## Sixty Plus, Piedmont Hospital



A program to enhance the well-being of older adults and their families by providing services, education and support. 1968 Peachtree Rd., Atlanta 30309; 404-605-3867.

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The Thanks Mom and Dad Fund® supports aging programs and can honor someone who has been an inspiration to you. Call 1-800-676-2433 to learn how.

