Persbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network Network Network

Resource Guide for Older Adult Ministries

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Good Morning from Oregon,

The theme of this issue of *PNN* is, *The Boomers are Here!* Baby Boomers are those born between 1946-1964. Birth rates soared following the end of World War II. At its peak in 1957, the US birth rate was one new birth every seven seconds. Boomers are the largest demographic group in our nation's history, numbering some 76 million people – roughly 28% of America's population. Much has been written seeking to describe the Boomer generation. Boomers are associated with rejection/redefinition of traditional values for as they reached each stage of life, the Boomers have intentionally changed it. This is also true of their view of retirement. Today, 10,000 Boomers are reaching the age of 65 each day.

Several articles in this issue reflect on our theme:

- MEMO FROM MEMBERSHIP by Linda Rauenbuehler
- BOOMERS AND AGING by Michele Hendrix
- BOOMERS ARE HERE News or History? by Chris Pomfret
- THE BABY BOOMERS ARE HERE by Quentin Holmes

Other articles in this issue include:

- HOW I FOUND POAMN by Annie Tarbutton
- TO HANOI WITH LOVE by Quentin Holmes
- UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF AGING WELL ON ORCAS ISLAND by Lynnette Wood, Ph.d
- 2018 OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES PLANNING GUIDE by Bill Young
- DOES AN AUTUMN TRIP TO SCOTLAND INTEREST YOU? by Mike Fonfara

PNN is <u>your</u> newsletter. We need you to send us short notes about things you have done or ideas that your group has found to work. Many older adults are in our congregations. By the power of God, plus our faithfulness and our warmth, we can reach out.

Thanks be to God!

Quentin a. Holmer

Quentin Holmes / Marcola, OR

Be kind every day. - Ceridwyn Burke (1976-2018)

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Michele Hendrix POAMN President

POAMN PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

I hope you are as excited as I am and making plans to attend the 2018 POAMN Annual Conference at the Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center on Lake Tahoe. Summer is the most popular time to visit Lake Tahoe. Thanks to temperatures in the mid to high 70's, the trails are ready to be hiked, the beaches are ready to be dozed upon and the lake is ready to be paddled. It is a beautiful location and this will be a delightful time of year to enjoy all of the events and activities this conference is offering. You will find all the details of the upcoming 2018 POAMN Conference and a registration brochure at www.poamn.org.

There is an inspirational beauty at Zephyr Point. So, if you prefer, you may simply take time to enjoy the magnificence of the mountains and the beauty of the deep blue lake where God's presence seems to reach out and drape visitors in a profound sense of peace. In addition to all the exciting presenters who will be leading us during the conference, you will leave the conference with additional tools to enhance your ministry. There is something special and often beneficial that happens at the POAMN events – sharing, caring, connection, learning, and networking! Please register now at <u>www.poamn.org</u>.

I would like to remind you to renew your membership for 2018. Simply go to the website mentioned above and click on the Membership link or contact us directly. While you are renewing your membership, please consider making a gift membership for your church or presbytery. This will encourage our congregations and presbyteries to think about the importance of ministering with and alongside those who are aging. Remember that we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your gifts are tax deductible. We count on our membership renewals, and we value and appreciate your gift or donation on behalf of a loved one. These help us to create and mail our newsletter, create the POAMN Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide, and sustain the important work of POAMN's advocacy for all who are on this journey of aging.

Remember that PC(USA) has designated the first Sunday in May as Older Adult Sunday (May 6th, 2018). If you do not have the 2018 POAMN Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide, you can find it online on our website, along with other archived OAM Planning Guides that are filled with ideas, encouragement, and complete worship bulletin templates for planning an Older Adult Sunday. If you prefer having a hard copy, they are available for \$3 by contacting our Support Staff – Ginny Nyhuis at <u>gnyhuis@frontier.com</u>.

Finally, I encourage you to send your stories and photos of Older Adult Week and/or any other church event or story you wish to share in our PNN Newsletter or on our Facebook page – Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network. For Facebook you should send the information to the administrators, myself – <u>tmichelehendrix@icloud.com</u> or to Ginny Nyhuis – <u>gnyhuis@frontier.com</u>. We look forward to sharing your stories and highlighting your ministry and members! Until next time ...

Michele Hendrix

POAMN President Email – <u>tmichelehendrix@icloud.com</u>

> For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus, to do good works in which God prepared in advance for us to do.

> > - Ephesians 1:10

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Linda Rauenbuehler Membership Committee Chair

MEMO FROM MEMBERSHIP The Boomers Are Here!

The theme for this issue of PNN is, "The Boomers Are Here." Baby Boomers are those some 76,000 of us who were born from 1946-1964, making us now 54- to 72-years-old. Boomers have never done anything quietly, and that will undoubtedly continue to be the trend when it comes to aging. Boomers still want to change the world, and they have a desire to make a difference.

For my own curiosity, I googled the key words *baby boomers and churches* and read about 5 articles to see if I could see any reoccurring themes. Here are some points that I found:

- 1. Boomers are interested in staying young and active and are likely to resist anything associated with aging, old, and "senior."
- 2. Boomers are searching for significance, meaning, and purpose. After focusing on career, status, and making money, they still feel something is missing.
- 3. Almost every church will feel the impact as Boomers retire. Contributions in the offering plate may be reduced as more people go on to a fixed income. For those with resources, church attendance may go down as Boomers travel.
- 4. There may be an increased volunteer force. Boomers have volunteered more than any other generation. At this stage in their life, they will probably respond better to flexible, short-term volunteer opportunities, rather than long, multi-year commitments.

Research demonstrates that people who volunteer tend to be healthier, live longer and have increased life satisfaction.

At our church, I coordinate a couple of social activities designed to get our older members out, but if I want to attract Baby Boomers, I may need to look at some short-term volunteer service projects that match the passions of this population in our membership.

POAMN Annual Conference at Lake Tahoe

I hope your calendars are marked and that you are as excited as I am to meet for our 2018 Annual Conference on June 5-8, 2018, at Zephyr Point on Lake Tahoe. The POAMN conferences are always a good opportunity to meet new people, get fresh ideas and become rejuvenated to go back to your particular setting with renewed enthusiasm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Rauenbuehler

POAMN Membership Chair



An Early Morning View of Lake Tahoe

It's what you learn after you think you know everything that makes a difference.

- Chip Eichelberger

HOW I FOUND POAMN by Annie Tarbutton, POAMN Conference Chair Blowing Rock, North Carolina

Along my spiritual journey, I've felt a "calling" to engage with Older Adults. When my children were young, I was a rural route driver for Meals on Wheels in Talbot County, Maryland. I was able to bring them with me on the route. I'm reminded of an older woman who was on the route. One day when we arrived, the emergency ambulance was there to take her to the hospital. She was so happy to see the children, she wanted to make sure that they got candy from her before she left! Later, when we lived in Newnan, GA, and the children were older, I volunteered with a Music Therapist at Budd Terrace at Wesley Woods, an older adult assisted living facility in Atlanta, GA. Additionally, I was ordained as a deacon at Newnan Presbyterian Church, in Newnan, GA, and I wanted to start an Older Adult Ministry. The church body approved this request, and Calvin's Crew was established with enthusiasm. We even had an elder on session for this ministry.

During this time of blossoming in Older Adult Ministry, I found out about POAMN through the Presbytery of Atlanta's Older Adult Ministry Committee, which I served on. Ms. Francis, a member at Newnan Presbyterian, accompanied me to a POAMN Conference in Daytona, FL, where we found valuable infor-

ANNIE TARBUTTON Leading POAMN Worship

mation, resources, and personal relationships to help create our new ministry. Later, I attended other POAMN conferences in Austin, TX, Atlanta, GA, and Stoney Point Presbyterian Conference Center in NY. Again, these conferences helped equip our leadership and shape Calvin's Crew. During one of these conferences, I met Pat Baker, who leads POAMN's Certification Program in Older Adult Ministry at Columbia Theological Seminary. She was working for the Rosalyn Carter Institute (RCI) of Caregiving and through our networking, I helped her lead a Regional CARE-NET through RCI. The CARE-NET was a group of services for the aging and housing providers, caregivers, churches, etc. Through this relationship with Pat and the CARE-NET, POAMN's influence helped provide much-needed assistance to our Older Adult Ministry and community partners.

After about six years of leadership with Calvin's Crew, I had to resign due to the demands of helping to care for both of my parents. They both had serious health concerns, and we had to transition them from their home. My father went into independent living, and my mother moved to a nursing home. Also, I had started POAMN's Older Adult Ministry Certification Program at Columbia but could not finish due to caring for my parents through this difficult time which ended after both of their deaths. I did not participate or communicate with POAMN for a lengthy period.

Next, I say a miracle happened! A short time after my mother's death, I received an unexpected telephone call from POAMN's President Michele Hendrix, another valuable POAMN connection! She asked if I would be willing to serve on POAMN's ExCom, and that's how I became POAMN's Conference Chair. God's timing is mysterious and gracious and I am so grateful that I said "yes" to Michele's request. I've grown so much in my leadership skills in serving POAMN and have had the opportunity to collaborate, create, explore, learn, and worship with others passionate about Older Adult Ministry. Furthermore, I've been able to continue in POAMN's Older Adult Ministry Certification Program and am working on completing my Capstone project.

Concluding, POAMN has been a generous, surprising, challenging, and loving gift along my spiritual journey. I give thanks and praise to God.



TO HANOI WITH LOVE

by Quentin A. Holmes, Deacon Central Presbyterian Church / Eugene, Oregon

"And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Rich and Jacquie Litchfield are long-time members of Central Presbyterian Church – Rich sings in the church choir and Jacquie serves as a deacon.

This spring, as they have each spring for 19 years now, Rich and Jacquie Litchfield are journeying to Hanoi, North Vietnam, where they volunteer teaching orthodontics at the National Hospital of Dentistry (NHOS) in Hanoi. "It's all about the relationships," says retired orthodontist Rich Litchfield, now age 77. While all orthodontists are dentists, only 6% of dentists are orthodontists – specialists who apply braces and align bite.

After Rich completed a four-year degree at the University of Oregon Dental School, the Vietnam War influenced Rich's decision to don a Navy uniform and accept a dentistry position with the U.S. Public Health Service in Oklahoma to fulfill a two-year military obligation. Following that, he spent two years of Orthodontics Residency in New Jersey.

The Vietnam War slipped into memory as the Litchfields focused on careers and family.

Fast forward to the year 1999. With their two sons, Matt and Drew, grown and independent, and their own careers shifting toward retirement, the Eugene couple wanted to offer their time and skills in a gesture of appreciation for successful lives.

In 2000, Rich and Jacquie accepted a two-week Health Volunteers Overseas assignment at the National Hospital of Dentistry (NHOS) in Hanoi to teach orthodontics. As they prepared for their first trip to Hanoi, questions hovered restlessly at the back of their minds. How would people react to them? Would they find a warm welcome or feel the chill of old antipathies?

"Here was a chance to face the people of Vietnam and contribute something healing," says Rich. "It was also a chance to deal with my own feelings."

That process began almost immediately when they landed in Hanoi. Awaiting them at the airport were four practicing dentists – all women – who would be Rich's first class of students. Their names were: Dr. Thu, Dr. Duong, Dr. Phuong, and Dr. Diep. All except Dr. Diep were married. The dental facility in Hanoi was quite old. Fortunately, Rich Litchfield had brought along not only orthodontic books, but also supplies such as dental pliers, wires, and modern appliances that attach directly to the patient's teeth.

We often think of teaching as lecturing. Rich Litchfield prefers a hands-on, collaborative approach. With a patient of one of the students seated in a dental chair, and everyone gathered around (while Jacquie looked on with a camera) the process was:

- 1. Have everyone look inside the patient's mouth to assess their current condition;
- 2. Ask the patient what <u>he/she</u> wanted;
- 3. Have the patient's dentist (one of the dental students) describe what they would usually do;
- 4. Have each of the other three dental students describe what they would usually do;
- 5. Only then would Dr. Litchfield make suggestions about things they might need to consider: "I wonder what if . . . ?"

"Have you thought about . . . ?"

6. And, collectively, they would arrive at, and perform, a more effective orthodontic procedure.

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Language was a daunting barrier. Although the dental students had been taught to read books written in English, verbal communication was another matter. Initially, English-Vietnamese, and Vietnamese-English translations were slow and not very effective – exact pronunciation is key to the meaning of a Vietnamese word. Enter Jacquie Litchfield. She helped bridge this barrier by employing pictures in the books and materials that she had brought along. Camaraderie and trust emerged in the efforts to understand and be understood.

Dr. Diep, who was single, took on responsibility for looking after the Litchfields. In response, Jacquie took on the role of a cultural ambassador. She shared with Dr. Diep what life in the USA was like. One day, Jacquie dared to admit her fears about volunteering in Vietnam.



AROUND THE DENTAL CHAIR IN HANOI Dr. Phuong, Dr. Thu, Nurse Hanh, Rich Litchfield, Dr. Nga, and Dr. Lan (The patient is Nurse Hanh's 13 year-old daughter, Chi)

She confided to Dr. Diep, "I was hesitant to come here because of what you might think of us because of the war." Dr. Diep's immediate reply was, "Please release that. You are the richest country in the world. We need your knowledge, and your protection." recalls Jacquie, now age 76.

Shortly thereafter, Dr. Diep and others brought in pictures of their families to share with Jacquie. One thing led to another, and the Litchfields were invited to the Diep family home.

Uncertainties crumbled and relationships grew. Social visits with families and parents of the Vietnamese dentists brought Rich and Jacquie face-to-face with men who had brought down American planes in the war. "I could have been one of our kids who might have been shooting at them," Rich says. Conversations layered in translations from English to Vietnamese and back bridged the distance between youth caught on opposite sides of the battle. These conversations freed the Litchfields to weave friendships that have acquired the strength of family connections.

"This relationship has been exciting," Rich says. "It invigorates us. We connect on Facetime and email. They



SHARING FAMILY PHOTOS WITH JACQUIE LITCHFIELD

send me electronic photos to consult on cases." "It feels like family," echoes Jacquie. "We are invited to their homes, to weddings, to New Year's celebrations. We even know their aunts and uncles and cousins."

Although Rich closed his Eugene orthodontics practice in 2007, their volunteer work in Vietnam continues to stimulate and challenge his professional skills. Since 2000, twenty young orthodontists have stood at the side of a dental chair in Hanoi to learn from Rich's teaching. They have practiced English and absorbed customs of Western culture in conversations with Jacquie. Rich introduced them to the World Federation of Orthodontics and helped them establish a Vietnamese chapter. Thirteen of Rich's dental students are now individual members of that chapter – along with several orthodontists from South Vietnam! This April 10th-11th the Litch-fields will be there to help celebrate the chapter's 1st anniversary. Some of Rich's students have now retired. Some have moved to other countries. Sixteen orthodontists currently serve patients at the National Hospital of Dentistry (NHOS) in Hanoi.

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In March of 2012, fifteen orthodontists from Vietnam attended an international conference in California. Afterwards, four of them then flew up to Eugene, OR, to visit the Litchfields. "Oh my, it was the first time any of them had ever seen snow." said Jacquie. "We made a lady snowman in our front yard." Rich then added, "And, we took them over to stay at our place near Florence, OR, on the Oregon Coast."

While Rich and Jacquie Litchfield have been contributing to the health of dental patients in Vietnam, they also feel deeply-blessed. "We might teach ourselves out of a job, but we'll never lose our friendships with these, our Vietnamese sisters," say Jacquie Litchfield.



ON THE OREGON COAST NEAR FLORENCE, OREGON Dr. Hai – Director of NHOS, Jacquie Litchfield, Dr. Duong, and Dr. Ha

Rich and Jacquie remain committed to volunteering in Vietnam. "We will continue to go as long as we feel we are making a difference and being helpful," Jacquie says.

ABIDING PRESENCE: LIVING FAITHFULLY IN END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS A Helpful New Resource from PC(USA)

"I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created." Romans 8:38

The pastoral guidebook, "Abiding Presence: Living Faithfully in End-of-Life Decisions," is a theologically and ethically grounded resource for pastoral care in light of new medical and legal choices involving end-of-life decisions. This helpful new resource from PC(USA) was prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and approved by the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

God's gift of life does not come without God's guidance. As medical science has reduced pain and permitted longer life, the duration and enjoyment of human life have been extended. Our Reformed Christian tradition recognizes the role of science in health care and healing, while affirming our wholeness in Christ. We cherish the conviction of God's embrace in life, through and beyond death, but we also recognize that death is a mystery and is often still a time of pain and suffering.

As Christians we see death as part of a purposeful journey undertaken by each of us in community. Our baptisms are recalled and completed at our deaths – whether they be sudden and untimely, prolonged and painful, or long-expected and peaceful. Death for us is not merely an individual event, but rather a communal leavetaking, connected to God, which involves our family, friends, and congregation. We certainly grieve for a loved one, but not as those without hope.

Written for individuals, family members, caregivers, and pastoral care workers, this helpful new resource provides key considerations for the question, *How do I want the end of my life to be?*

This 46-page pastoral guidebook contains thoughtful chapters on:

- The Contexts for Advance Care Planning and End-of-Life Care
- Pastoral Support for End-of-life Care and Choices
- Considerations for the Community of Faith
- Special Concerns or Circumstances in End-of-life Planning.

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It also contains online sources for suggested additional reading about topics such as:

- Advance Directive forms [state-by-state];
- American Nurses Association statement on the RN's roles and responsibilities in providing expert care and counseling at the end of life;
- "Dying in America: Improving Quality and Honoring Individual Preferences Near the End-of-Life;"
- Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) [state-by-state].

To download a free copy of "Abiding Presence: Living Faithfully in End of Life Decisions," simply go to: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/End-of-Life-Decisions-2016-ACSWP.pdf

Thank you, PC(USA)!

BOOMERS AND AGING

by Michele Hendrix, POAMN President, New Braunfels, Texas

According to research by Perry Chang at PC(USA), the median age in our denomination is mid-60's. That means we are almost half way through the Baby Boomer aging process. You know, the one where each day some 10,000 people who were born between 1946-1964 are turning 65 years old and that rate will continue another 8-10 years. The older Boomers are now 71, and the younger Boomers are in their 50's. In the January/February 2017 issue of Presbyterians Today Magazine, Perry's article "*Talkin' 'bout my generation*" lays out current statistics that should be getting attention - both by our denomination and our local congregations. Find the link at <u>https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/0117-gofigure/</u>

Research shows that today's church seems largely out-of-touch with its aging membership. In many of our congregations, we are seeing our fastest growth in older adult memberships. Older adults fill our pews, provide for our financial stability, and participate in learning and service opportunities. So what lies ahead for aging Boomers in congregations that may, or may not, offer ministry to those who are aging? There seems to be little focus for the multi-generational group we call Older Adult Ministry, which is comprised demographically of the Greatest Generation, Builders, and Boomers. As a Boomer, I believe change is necessary in a congregational system that still places its priority focus on children, young adults, and young families.

Yes, as a Boomer I am not hesitant to use the "C" word – change. If you are a Boomer, or know a Boomer, you are aware that this collective generation does not fear change – they embrace it and make it happen! It amazes me that as our denomination and congregations continue to lose members, they are intent on a mission of bringing in children, young adults, and young families, all of which are vitally important to the church. However, by all appearances, it seems that we often are sidelining the largest number of our members – the aging adults. This is the largest group in most congregations and one that is often overlooked in casting a vision for the future of the church. It is a conundrum - something is amiss and something is missing, and most often it is the aging adult when it comes to a vision for the church and inclusion – something we talk about often in the denomination and the church. But when it comes to attendance, study, teaching, bible study, and tithing, aging adults take the lead and are the undergirding of the church.

Somewhere, at some point in time, we must break down the silos in our systems that cause this dysfunction. Why not think in terms of Older Adult Ministry as multi-generational – which it is? Why not try to connect these generations? Some forward thinking congregations and organizations are doing this and doing it successfully. The claim that older persons have nothing to offer younger generations is inaccurate and misleading. Moreover, the case must be made that younger generations have much to offer older generations. It is simply a matter of fostering and building relationships through side-by-side opportunities that connect older persons to younger persons and vice-versa. By breaking down the silos and barriers, we open the door of opportunity for all generations to connect, worship, and serve together. Why not give it a try?

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF AGING WELL IN A REMOTE LOCATION by Lynnette Wood, Ph.D., Orcas Island, Washington

[Editor's NOTE: Lynnette Wood is an internationally-known remote sensing scientist who has helped developing countries assess their resources and their needs in order to plan effectively for the future. She and husband, Dr. Kenneth Gibbs- a retired astronomer- now live on Orcas Island in Puget Sound.]

It all started innocently enough. I was sitting on the inter-island ferry, chatting casually with someone from the Orcas Island Senior Center. She mentioned that they were planning to conduct a survey about "Aging on Orcas," and I mentioned that I had previous survey research experience. That was almost one year ago, and what a learning experience it has turned out to be!

Orcas Island is located in the northern Puget Sound of Washington State. With a land area of just over 57 square miles, the island is home to some 5,400 people. The majority live in, or near, the small town of Eastsound (population about 3,750). The rest of the population is scattered about the island, including several ill-defined "hamlets" with populations of only a few hundred each. During the height of the summer tourist season, the population of Orcas Island can easily double.

Our island is rural, with pastoral fields nestled among heavily forested hills and low mountains, and nary a stop light to be

found. We have limited health care services, and consider ourselves lucky to have two medical clinics. Other islands in the archipelago may have just one clinic, or more likely none. The largest island, San Juan Island, has a small hospital but is a 45- minute ferry ride away. On Orcas Island, we have no hospital or, with the exception of physical therapy, no specialized medical facilities, no assisted living facility, no hospice care facili-

ty, no respite care facility. Nor, with the exception of a tourist shuttle that runs during the summer months, is there any public transportation on the island. The only ways to get off or on the island are by ferry, boat, or plane. Thus, we are an isolated, rural community with limited options for either public or private medical services.

It may seem surprising to learn that the median age is 56.5, meaning that half the population is older than 56.5 years. In fact, the only sub-group projected to still be increasing in size over the next two decades are people over the age of 75. Since moving to the island eight years ago, I have met more people in their 90's than I had met during my entire previous 60+ years of life! Past census data record a number of Orcas Islanders aged 104 or older.

So, is Orcas Island really Ponce de Leon's Fountain of Youth? Hardly. To start with, those who choose to live on an island are probably people who are relatively healthy to begin with. People who face chronic disease probably would not move to an island to live, and any islander succumbing to a debilitating disease will almost always be forced to move back to the mainland for want of care on our island. In addition, it is well known that education is correlated with healthy living habits, and Orcas Islanders have the third highest level of educational attainment in the state, only three percentage points behind Seattle's King County. This is particularly impressive when you consider that King County is home to Microsoft, Amazon and Boeing, as well as many other high tech companies, not to mention the University of Washington and numerous other colleges and universities.



LOCATION OF ORCAS ISLAND IN WASHINGTON STATE



THE FERRY LANDING AT ORCAS ISLAND

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The "Aging on Orcas" survey was intended to gather information about the needs of those who chose, and who are able, to remain on Orcas Island as they age. It was designed to reflect the needs of our inter-dependent rural community, a place where community investment is critical to maintaining the island's way of life. Because the demographic trends islanders are facing will impact the entire community, the survey was open to everyone, not just senior citizens.

The survey was implemented both in paper form and using Survey Monkey (an on-line survey tool). A total of 272 individuals completed the survey, ranging in age from 27 to 92, with an average age of 69 years. Respondents were asked to rate issues according to their level of concern. The two top-rated concerns among all respondents were:

- 1) Reduced ability to do the things they have always done, or used to do;
- 2) Reduced ability to maintain home and property.

Also highly-rated were concerns about medical care, options for home health care, deterioration in physical health or in mental health, loss of mobility, and inability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Respondents were also asked to rate how much they valued some possible "solutions." The highest-rated solution was to have an assisted living or similar facility on the island. Interestingly, the younger the group, the more highly they rated this solution. In fact, the older the age group, the more they rated this as having little or no value. This may be because people who actually need to move into an assisted living facility have already done so, leaving the island and leaving their relatively healthier compatriots behind.

Other highly-rated "solutions" were availability of additional home care services or home health providers; assistance in accessing medical care and physicians, specialists, referrals, and/or insurers; and more transportation options.



A RURAL SCENE ON ORCAS ISLAND

Interest in "lectures and other educational opportunities" was tied for fifth in terms of value overall. This probably reflects the high average level of education of island residents and their desire to remain intellectually engaged. While rated highly over all respondents, the rating decreased with age. Perhaps this is due to the fact that, as people age, they find it more difficult to leave their homes, especially in the evenings. So, attending lectures simply becomes less relevant to them.

The survey will be followed up with three focus group discussions. We wanted to use the focus groups to "pilot test" some solution "packages" derived from our survey results. To select focus group topics, we used a number of criteria. One criterion was that the concern was ranked highly in the survey; however, this was not the only criteria. Other criteria were that the concerns, and possible solutions to address those concerns, were in areas which the Senior Center has the mandate and capacity to address; and that solutions would impact the largest number of people (as opposed to, say, the most vulnerable people). Using these criteria we were able to winnow down a long list of 18 possible topic areas to just three: Home Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and a Coordinator to help people navigate a range of services. At the time of this writing, planning for the focus groups is well underway. We hope to complete them by the end of April 2018.

So, what worked well, and what do we wish we had done differently? First, our study benefited from a small grant from the Orcas Island Community Foundation. This ensured that we had the necessary resources to un*(Continued on page 11)*

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dertake the survey. Second, the effort was spearheaded by a small, but very strong, team consisting of a handful of people, half of whom had previous experience with survey design and execution and half of whom had specific "subject matter" expertise. (One team member had experience with both.) The subject matter experts had experience providing services to the aging population on Orcas, so they already had a good idea about the kinds of challenges that people are facing. Having both subject matter and technical expertise was critical to developing a comprehensively robust, yet scientifically valid, survey. An experienced facilitator coordinated the process and ensured that steady progress was made during the course of the study.

The survey questionnaire was designed with three main components: Concerns, solutions and demographics. We conducted two pre-tests. During each pre-test, roughly a dozen individuals took the survey in a "mock" setting. The pre-tests helped us identify problems in how some of the questions and how the answer categories were structured. They also let us know approximately how long the survey would take to complete. The pre-tests also helped us to identify some concerns and solutions that we had missed.

The final questionnaire presented a list of 20 concerns and asked respondents to rate them into five categories, from "highly concerned" to "not at all concerned." This worked well. Respondents were offered an opportunity to raise additional concerns not included in the survey. We judged that our list was already fairly comprehensive when the types of concerns that were added were ones that were very specific to the individual responding, such as "Concern about my ability to continue to travel to my family home in Asia on an annual basis."

Similarly, respondents were asked to rate 18 "solutions" from "high value to me" to "no value at all to me." This also worked quite well. And, as with the concerns, those that were added tended to be very specific to the individual.

However, when people were asked separately to list their three highest priority concerns, and their three highest priority solutions, this did not work well at all. This confused a lot of people, and the results very often disagreed with the previously rated responses (with, for example, people listing as having high priority solutions that they had rated as having little or no value in the previous section). In hindsight, we should have left this out. At best, it provided a validation of the ratings, but no new information. However, it worked so poorly that the data from these two questions were not used in our analysis.

Most of the demographic questions were those one would expect in any survey (age, gender, and so forth). In the demographic section, we also asked respondents to rate their health as compared to others of a similar age. We had hoped to find a relationship between people's self-reported health and their concerns about health care, but in fact we found none. This might have been different if we had had a much larger sample size.

As intended, the results of the "Aging on Orcas" survey, along with the results of the focus group discussions, will help the Senior Center define options for investment decisions — decisions that can now be justified with scientific data. In fact, these data are already being used to lobby other entities for program and policy changes and new investments in areas outside the mandate of the Orcas Island Senior Center. The data may also be used in the future to seek additional State or Federal grants. Finally, the survey will be used as a baseline against which future progress can be measured as the Senior Center employs new and existing resources to address the island's needs.

For me personally, being involved in this effort has brought a new awareness of the challenges that I myself may face in the future and has prompted me to start thinking about how I can prepare ahead of time to address them. One thing that became very clear is that the majority of people do not think of themselves as aging at all (although they may think about the aging of another person). Whether this is denial or whether it is simply that we have a hard time imagining ourselves as being "old" or "aged" is less important than the fact that we do not always plan as we could for the decline that we will almost inevitably face if we are fortunate enough to live, as do many Orcas Islanders, well into our 90s and beyond.

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BOOMERS ARE HERE... News or History?

By Chris Pomfret, POAMN Vice-President

Actually, the Boomers have been here for up to 72 years, if the definition of the generation born between 1946 and 1964 is used. But, yes they are here and continue to dominate the scene as more than 10,000 people turn 65 every day in the US alone. The big question is: What does it mean for this specific generation and the country/world as a whole?

As someone born right in the middle of the boomer era, I feel utterly blessed to have lived in these times. I imagine that everyone has a legitimate tendency to say that about their own particular sinew of life on earth, but I really believe it applies to the Boomers more than other generations. Here's why:

First, the Boomer generation started right after the end of World War II, and only 28 years after the end of World War I. The generations, across the world, who endured those years were brave and extremely stolid, for they also endured a terrible economic depression in between those two brutal wars. While no one can ever really understand what it was like to live through that period, despite the many books, movies and family recounts of life in those times, we know that it was not the Earth's finest of times. Yes, the Vietnam War was a horrible penance, especially for the older half of the Boomers who were called up for action, and at a time when the US was experiencing human rights issues that further divided the country. I was living in Europe for the first half of my life and, interestingly, other than the apartheid issues in South Africa, the racial issues and the Vietnam War were very much "US only" issues. Europe and the other continents largely escaped any major conflicts, so if we look globally, I would contest that the Boomers have actually been most fortunate, overall, in that regard.

Second, there is the widespread consensus that the music of the 60's and 70's was the best ever, and this view is shared by subsequent generations. Who would have thought that my children would like the music that I liked and that influenced my formative years. I didn't have any empathy with the music from my parents' generation. Moreover, my parents denigrated the music of the 60's and 70's, believing that the groups were "9 -day wonders," looked like girls, and couldn't play their instruments. The change from clean-cut, ballad-playing singers to long-haired lay-abouts playing twangy guitars was a big shift for them to bear in a very short time. America bore the brunt of the British Rock invasion. In 1997, at the age of 43, I went to see "The Who" in concert and was amazed that I was the oldest person in the audience! Moreover, many of the groups of the 60's and 70's are still performing 50 years later. I feel blessed to have lived in a time when such influential and long-lasting music was created. If I develop dementia or Alzheimer's, I am told that the music from that era that mean the most to me so that my children can play them and hopefully get a positive reaction from me, even when I may not recognize my children themselves.

Third, technology has been so prominent in the life of Boomers. While I agree that all generations have experienced and been responsible for technological advancements, most would agree that the accomplishments in the life of Boomers have been exceptional. Some of the older Boomers were living "by the seat of the pants" as they were empowered to a put man on the moon in a real hurry! I have heard some of these now-elderly engineers and scientists talk about how much freedom they were given to advance the state-of-the-art and how fulfilling it was for them, compared with their work in later life, which was much more regulated and "overmanaged." Computer and communications capabilities were also advancing at the speed of light (pun intended), such that a lot of the fiction of the 1960's became reality 30-40 years later.

So, the Boomers have had some good times, have lived in a relatively fortunate era across the world, and have left a notable and, I would say, commendable legacy or fingerprint on the Earth. But as the title of this article says, "The Boomers are here," and what is left for them to accomplish? The Boomers are sandwiched between

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an older generation that didn't have much in terms of material possessions and a younger generation that is minimalistic. Boomers are in the middle with collections of "this, that and the other" and, in general, too much stuff. One thing that the Boomers can do is to downsize their material possessions rather than leaving everything for their children to deal with. It's interesting that the children of Boomers collect nothing tangible (even music and photographs have become electronic), and I muse whether this is a silent demonstration against all the stuff that their parents had or just a natural progression of lifestyles.

The other thing Boomers can do while they are still active and capable is ensure that they can talk meaningfully to their children, their grandchildren, and maybe even to their great grandchildren. We are seeing two-yearolds who are more adept on iPads than most Boomers are, and ways and means of basic communication have changed profoundly in the last twenty years. A challenge for Boomers is to preserve the centuries-old, or even millennia-old, means of communication, i.e., face-to-face verbal and written, but without distancing themselves from the newer generations. Many of these newer generations describe themselves as SBNR's - Spiritual But Not Religious. How might we find ways to bond and be a positive influence on them while still retaining an element of "coolness" in the eves and minds of these youngsters?

Both of these challenges for the Boomers are "here and now." It's not too early to start on both of these ventures; they each require quite different thoughts and approaches. However, the outcome of both will be similar. We will leave our future generations without a material mess to contend with and with memories and positive influences seared in their minds.

God's challenges don't stop, and there's no logic to suggest that they should. We Boomers endured the challenges of growing up at school and developmentally, putting a man on the moon, and endless other challenges along the way. We have much to accomplish before this game of life is over; I have cited just two possibilities. While the Boomers are still "here," let's make the most of every day and show our successors how we finish strong.

THE BABY BOOMERS ARE HERE!

by Ouentin Holmes, Deacon Central Presbyterian Church/ Eugene, Oregon

Baby Boomers are those who were born between 1946-1964. After the end of World War II, birth rates soared. At its peak in 1957, the US birth rate was one new birth every seven seconds. Boomers represent the largest demographic group in our nation's history, numbering some 76 million people - roughly 28% of America's population. Much has been written seeking to describe the Boomer generation. Typical descriptions include:

- Generation of optimism, exploration, and opportunity;
- Increased educational, financial and social opportunities; **BOOM**
- Stability, prosperity, and opportunity.

Common traits of Boomers include:

- Grew up in a healthy environment;
- Defined by their jobs;
- Workaholics, created 60-hour workweeks;
- Consumers, success highly visible:
- Love-hate relationship with management;
- Likely to challenge authority, want leadership positions.



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Boomers are associated with a rejection or redefinition of traditional values, for as they reached each stage of life, Boomers intentionally changed that stage. This is also true for their view of retirement. Each day, 10,000 Boomers turn 65 years old – and that rate will continue through the year 2025. By force of numbers alone, Boomers will redefine old age in America, just as they made their mark on teen culture, young adult life, and middle age.

But don't tell Boomers that old age starts at 65. The typical Boomer believes that old age doesn't begin until at least 72. Indeed, a recent PEW Research survey found that about half of the Boomers feel nine years younger than their chronological age.

In their use of technology, the youngest Boomers (ages 53-62) are nearly as likely to be online as young adults, and the oldest Boomers (ages 63-71) are notably more likely to be online than adults ages 72 and over. Nearly two-thirds of Boomers say they follow the news most or all the time – a higher share than among younger adults.



Boomers' views about an array of changes transforming American family life align more closely with younger generations than with older ones. For example, Boomers, like younger adults, are far more likely to say that the main purpose of marriage is mutual happiness and fulfillment rather than child rearing.

Among those Boomers who are approaching the end of their working years, six out of ten workers say they may have to postpone retirement. According to employment statistics, the older workforce is growing more rapidly than the younger workforce.

By standard measures, such as the percentage who pray daily or their frequency of attending religious services, Boomers are less religious than adults 72 and older, but more religious than adults in younger generations. A PEW Research survey found that 43% say they are a "strong" member of their religion, a higher share than among younger adults and a lower share than among older ones. Four out of ten Boomers say they attend religious services at least once a week. Conversely, 13% say they have "no religious affiliation," lower than for younger adults, but higher than for older adults.

America's Boomer generation is reaching retirement age – and they are redefining what retirement means. Theirs is an active retirement. Many even refuse to think about quitting work at their regular jobs. The phrase, "60 years of age is the new 40," is being replaced by, "Retirement begins at 72."

Characteristics of Baby Boomer workers

Values

- Individual choice
- Community involvement
- Prosperity
- Ownership
- Self-actualizing
- Health and wellness

- Attributes
 - Adaptive
 - Goal-oriented
 - Focus on individual choices and freedom
 - Adaptive to a diverse workplace
 - Positive attitude

Work styles

- Confidence in tasks
- Emphasize team-building
- Seek collaborative, group decision making
- Avoid conflict

POAMN NETWORK NEWS

OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES PLANNING GUIDE

by Bill Young / POAMN Liaison to PAHSA and PC(USA)

May is Older Adult Month and Presbyterian Churches and churches of other denominations will be celebrating Older Adult Sunday on Sunday, May 6th.

With more than 40% of those in the pews each Sunday in congregations across the country being seniors, and additional older adults unable to attend worship, church leaders are eager to learn ways to minister to older adults. POAMN's Planning Guide, which is produced each year, provides a range of valuable resources for those serving older adults in Presbyterian Churches and other organizations across the country.

Ten member organizations of the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (PAHSA) have made a commitment of a gift of \$1,000.00 each year for five years to ensure the publication of the Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide. These organizations are:

- Human Good, with senior living communities in States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada and Washington;
- Ohio Living, with senior living communities in the State of Ohio;
- Presby's Inspired Life, with senior living communities in the states of Pennsylvania and Delaware;
- Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina, with senior living communities in the State of South Carolina;
- **Presbyterian Homes & Services**, with senior living communities in the States of Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin;
- **Presbyterian Manors of Mid-America**, with senior living communities in the States of Kansas and Missouri;
- Presbyterian SeniorCare Network, with senior living communities in Western Pennsylvania;
- **Presbyterian Senior Living**, with senior living communities in the States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware;
- Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, with senior living communities in the State of Michigan;
- Westminster Communities of Florida, with senior living communities in the State of Florida.

Please show your appreciation for this support to POAMN by considering one of these fine Presbyterianrelated organizations when seeking senior care for yourself or someone you know.

GOING TO ST. LOUIS?

by Bill Young / POAMN Liaison to PAHSA and PC(USA)

<u>Going to St. Louis?</u>

The 223rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will meet from June 16th until June 23rd in St. Louis. Commissioners will come from throughout the country to do the work of the church.

POAMN, along with our sister Presbyterian-related organization serving older adults, Presbyterian Association of Homes & Services for the Aging (PAHSA), will be sharing a large booth in the exhibit hall during this week.

If you are going to be at the General Assembly and are interested in spending some of your spare time to tell the story about POAMN to thousands who will visit the exhibit hall, please contact Bill Young at <u>Bill.young.jr@verizon.net</u> or (215) 260-1054.

MIRIAM DUNSON LEGACY FUND

by Quentin Holmes / Eugene, Oregon

This POAMN Fund was established in honor of one of the living pioneers of Older Adult Ministries. Rev. Dr. Miriam Dunson served as a Presbyterian missionary in South Korea for 18 years, where she worked in the Mission Business Office handling business affairs for some 90 missionaries. She also taught Bible, English and typing in HanNam University in Taejon and Soong Sill University in Seoul. Upon returning to the U.S. in 1973, she served as Missionary Recruiter and Missionary Personnel Director for the Presbyterian Church, U.S. in Atlanta.

Miriam earned a B.A. in Business Education from Georgia State College for Women, an M.A in Bible from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry degree focusing on Older Adult Ministry from Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS), Decatur, GA. She has served as a college chaplain (Agnes Scott College for five years), chaplain in a large Methodist retirement community, and the pastor of a church. Beginning in 1990, Dr. Dunson spent 14 years on the national staff of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Louisville, KY, where she served as Associate for Older Adult Ministry.



CTS Prof. Marvin Simmers and Rev. Dr. Miriam Dunson

Miriam says that much of what she learned about older adult ministry began in Korea as she observed the honor and respect shown to older persons in that culture. After returning to the U.S. and observing the manner in which older persons were sometimes "put on the shelf," their needs not met and their skills not utilized, she went to seminary, where her doctor of ministry degree was focused on ministry with older adults. Her goal was to find ways to raise awareness of the needs of older adults and also highlight the many talents that older adults can bring to the church.

While on staff at PC(USA), Miriam helped rewrite, edit, and republish three books on Older Adult Ministry:

- Older Adult Ministry, A Resource for Program Development
- Older Adult Ministry, A Guide for the Presbytery Committee
- Older Adult Ministry, A Guide for the Session and Congregation

These guidebooks helped many of us as we sought to develop older adult ministry programs in our local congregations and our presbyteries.

Dr. Dunson authored, *A Very Present Help: Psalm Studies for Older Adult;* has written enumerable articles; has led workshops; and has given keynote addresses and preached throughout the nation. Upon her retirement, she received the prestigious Spirituality and Aging Award from the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging, a constituency group of the National Council on the Aging in Washington, D.C.

In retirement, Miriam moved back to the 100-acre farm in Commerce, Georgia, where she grew up. She told the staff in Louisville when she retired that she was moving back to the farm and would get a dog, a horse and a motorcycle. She first got the dog, a black lab named Annie who accompanies her everywhere. There was no barn, so she couldn't get a horse. Instead, she bought a John Deere Gator for running around the pastures with Annie-dog. To complete her motor pool, she bought a John Deere riding mower, for mowing a very large lawn, and a battery-operated golf cart that she uses for everything else because it doesn't burn gas!

Those of us who are privileged to know Miriam Dunson personally think of her as being "85 years young!"

POAMN NETWORK NEWS

DOES AN AUTUMN TOUR IN SCOTLAND INTEREST YOU?

by Revs. Mike Fonfara and Lynn Fonfara, Beverly Hills, Florida

Revs. Mike and Lynn Fonfara invite you to join them, family, and POAMN friends in an October spiritual journey to the land of strong Christian heritage.



SAINT GILES CATHEDRAL - EDINBURGH



LOCH LOMOND CRUISE

Working with Educational Opportunities Tours (EO) (www.eo.travelwithus.com), for professional planning and licensed local guides, Mike and Lynn will host a grand tour of Scotland's midlands. Named *In the foot-steps of John Knox & the Reformation*, it visits key locations of the nation's faith history. A nice bonus is spending October 16-24, 2018, with POAMN friends and family members and making new friends while enjoying wonderful Scottish culture. An exciting 4-day Post-Tour London Extension is also offered.

A word about management of this tour is appropriate. Educational Opportunities Tours is a leader in the Christian tour industry. Here is how this Lakeland, Florida, business with strong connections to the United Methodist Church describes their travel ministry.

"Since 1974, Educational Opportunities has been dedicated to providing quality Christian travel programs at an affordable price. Over the years, more than 400,000 Christians have traveled on the various faith-based tours. From its inception, EO incorporated elements of Christian learning whenever possible. Lectures, study books, and specialized guiding are the pioneering hallmarks of EO's development. Today, many companies have copied the EO educational approach to faith-based travel, but our biblical tours remain some of the highest quality Christian travel programs available."

If you have questions about Educational Opportunity Tours, please call them (800) 247-0017.

Here, in brief, is the itinerary for our Autumn Tour of Scotland:

- 10/16 Meet in New York and depart USA (meals served in flight).
- 10/17 Arrive in Glasgow or Edinburgh, Britannia
- 10/18 Edinburgh: Edinburgh Castle, St. Giles Cathedral, & Princess Street
- 10/19 Edinburgh: John Knox House, descend the Royal Mile, & Holyrood
- 10/20 Dunfurmline Abbey, St. Andrews Church & Castle (with visit to "Old Course")
- 10/21 Church at Perth & Cruise on Loch Lomond
- 10/22 -Isle of Iona
- 10/23 Inveraray Castle & Glasgow Cathedral
- 10/24 Return to USA or Depart Glasgow by train through England for London
- 10/25 to 10/27 London: Westminster Abbey, St. James Palace, Bunhill Fields Cemetery,

Wesleys Chapel, St. Giles without Cripplegate Church, day on your own, and return to USA.

Please contact Rev. Mike or Lynn Fonfara at <u>mikefonfara@tampabay.rr.com</u> or phone us at (352) 527-8321 for a brochure or for answers to your questions.

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MEMBERSHIP FOR 2018

Membership fees for 2018 are now being accepted. Thank you to those that have joined POAMN for 2018! Special thanks to those that have made an extra donation to support POAMN!

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2018 PRESBYTERIAN OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES NETWORK CONFERENCE



SAVORING THE JOURNEY

"So that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:20a

June 5-8, 2018 Zephyr Point Conference Center, Zephyr Cove, Nevada

REGISTER at the <u>ASSOCIATION EVENTS</u> page of <u>www.poamn.org</u> Or contact Ginny Nyhuis, POAMN Support Staff, for a printed copy of the registration brochure. Email: gnyhuis@frontier.com; Phone: (615) 426-1545