

Joint Newsletter

With this issue, the Iowa Commission on Aging joins the Iowa Gerontology Center in the production and cost of printing and mailing of a newsletter. It is anticipated that the combined resources will allow us to expand our news services. Your continued cooperation is needed to keep us informed about activities and concerns related to aging and gerontology.

Long-term Care for Elders

Dr. Martin Sicker, Assistant to Administration on Aging Commissioner, Dr. Robert Benedict, has indicated that long-term care will be a priority area with Administration on Aging for 1977-78. This concern echoes that of Dr. Benedict in his August 3, 1977, testimony before the Select Committee on Aging of the U.S. House of Representatives:

"There is a very high correlation between advanced age and the increased functional disabilities. Among those people not in institutions, 65 and over, studies indicate that about 14 percent are either bedfast or housebound. . . .

Every look at institutional care concludes that perhaps as many as one-third of the elderly living in institutions could live in the community if adequate alternatives were available. Every examination of alternative living arrangements produces reports of over-utilization, long waiting lists, and inappropriate placements. . . .

What we would like to suggest is that. . . we really ought to consider a two-tiered national social policy. The first part of that policy is one which would address the broad needs of all older people. Such things as the attack that

you are bringing to mandatory retirement. Such things as the need to open up all of our educational institutions. Such things as making transportation more accessible; our general government services.

What we would urge. . . is to be specifically concerned about the problems of a subpopulation of older people who are very old, who are poor, who are disabled, and who are without assistance."

Governor's Conference

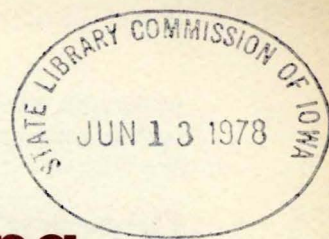
The 1978 Governor's Conference on Aging has been set for May, 16, at Veterans Auditorium in Des Moines. The keynote speaker will be Bernard Nash, former Director of the American Association of Retired Persons and the National Retired Teachers Association. Nash has also served as Director of the Foster Grandparent Program and as a Deputy Commissioner of the U.S. Administration on Aging. He is the immediate past president of the International Federation on Aging, an organization of representatives of 21 nations which seeks to promote the status of older persons throughout the world. His speech will focus on the new trends in the field of aging.

The conference will also feature addresses by Governor Robert Ray, Glenn Bowles, Executive Director of the Commission on the Aging, Senator John Murray and Nadine Birch.

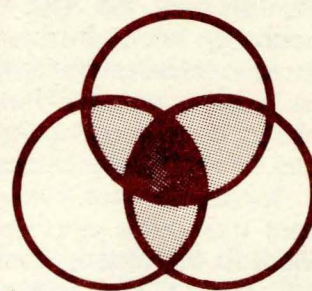
The afternoon session will be highlighted by workshops on Consumer Protection, Health Programs in Iowa, and Social Security.

Registration forms are available by writing to: Commission on the Aging, 415 Tenth Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319, or calling (515) 281-5187.

The cost of the conference is



Aging and Gerontology



Iowa Gerontology Center
Commission on
the Aging

U.S. GOVERNMENT
Depository Material

In this issue:

Long-term Care
Governor's Conference
Successful Older Learner
Hearing Problems & Aging
Library Services
Research Grants
Research Publications

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\$7.00 with the luncheon or \$2.00 without the luncheon.

Director's Notes

by Tom Walz

In the last newsletter I commented on the inter-institutional structure of the Iowa Gerontology Center. In this issue, I would like to share similar reflections on its "service orientation."

When we speak of the service orientation of the IGC, I don't mean to imply that we are about to tread on the territory of the provider network. The Commission on Aging, the Area Offices on Aging, the Department of Social Services, etc., have legal mandates and responsibilities to the elderly. Service for IGC means the organization and deployment of our university resources in such a way that we complement the service effort of

the provider groups.

The IGC service orientation, therefore, involves a shared concern with the provider groups for the well-being of the older person. Our role would include: (1) preparing future practitioners with appropriate knowledge and skill in gerontology, (2) offering some additional continuing education workshops to practitioners in the field, (3) conducting policy related and program evaluation research (in addition to basic research) related to the emerging aging issues, (4) providing some consultation in program design and development (upon request) when faculty resources uniquely fit such requests, and (5) affording some specialized services to elderly persons when these are essential to the training/research mandates of the university.

We believe that through IGC's efforts to combine faculty resources and expertise from the

three major state universities, we can efficiently, as well as effectively, fulfill these complementary roles. Each of the state schools has an active Continuing Education program, and of course, Iowa State has an Extension Service that reaches into all 99 counties of the state. The range of faculty expertise within the three institutions is incredibly extensive.

Yet a commitment to service is not enough. IGC must ultimately demonstrate its ability to move from stated objectives to actual performance. It must, further, carefully design its service efforts to complement those of primary direct service and planning agencies. For the past several years, we have concentrated on getting a handle on our resources and getting them organized. While our real test is yet to come, I am increasingly confident that the Iowa Gerontology Center can meet the challenge.

RESEARCH REPORTS

The Successful Older Learner

by Roger Hiemstra,
professor, adult and
extension education,
Iowa State University



There are some people, "self-actualized individuals", who reach a stage of maturity, calmness, and peace with the world. Few people really achieve it, but some do!

These are the people I have been studying. My reasons stem from research completed earlier. I and several students interviewed 250 older persons to discover obstacles preventing participation in formal adult education. We found that a lot of stereotypes about older learners could be discarded; the older learners were heavily involved in learning, most of it outside the institutional classroom arena.

This left me intrigued

about the habits of older people. Subsequently, I studied some very mentally active people; people I have termed "successfully aged". Thirty older people reputed to be active in learning were identified. After in-depth interviews, I began to look for some causal variables of successful lifelong learning.

Many things did not seem to make any difference. Money, for example. Other than total poverty, I saw all sorts of situations. Some were just getting by while others were very comfortable. However, all had achieved a satisfaction in life and in their learning pursuits that went beyond material needs. Health also did not

* The process of establishing an Iowa Gerontology Center is in progress and the use of the term in this newsletter indicates continued development in that direction.

seem important. Several people had various debilitating problems. But such disabilities appeared to have little relationship to their outlook on life.

Education was important, but high amounts didn't appear to make a difference. More than half had been school teachers or one of their parents had been. Thus, an attitude about lifelong learning, constant updating, and being able to relate to many different topics may

be an important variable. Of the thirty interviewed, almost two-thirds were first-born. Another possible causal factor!

Perhaps the most important variable was a fierce independence found in almost all interviewees. They were highly self-motivated and had overcome all sorts of adversities. Many held the belief that each successfully aged person has stored up an inner resource of life's

satisfactions to call upon in the older years.

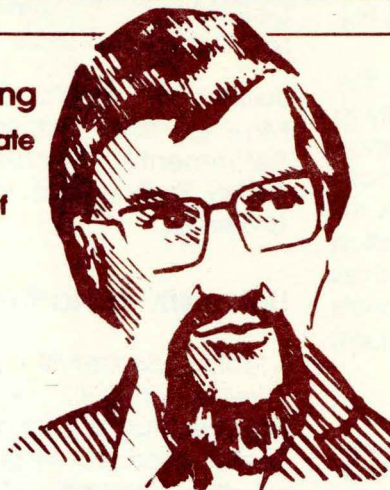
Conclusions cannot be drawn on causes of successful older adult learning. Obviously, more research is needed. However, I'm convinced that people are very capable of learning throughout life. Our real challenge is changing society's attitudes regarding the lifelong learning abilities of all people. I hope we are up to the challenge.

Hearing Problems and Aging

by Charles Anderson, associate professor, department of Otolaryngology, University of Iowa Hospitals

Reduced ability to hear and understand speech is so prevalent among older members of highly civilized societies that most people expect to have poorer hearing as they grow older. The incidence of measurable hearing loss in western cultures has been demonstrated repeatedly to increase with age. Most reports in the USA suggest that over 50% of those over 75 years of age have measurable hearing losses.

With considerable justification, hearing loss is assumed to have a negative impact upon interpersonal communication, socialization, and general quality of life—the basis for a commonly held



stereotype of the old, lonely, hearing impaired person. The recent report of Powers and Powers (1978) at ISU, as well as clinical experience, strongly suggest that our stereotype should be of highly individualized patterns of hearing abilities and performance among our older citizens.

We are currently engaged in gathering pilot data for a major investigation into the development and impact of hearing loss

as a function of aging. For the principal investigation, nearly 500 subjects ranging from 40 to 80 years of age will provide hearing history, hearing performance, and hearing test information for a cross-sectional analysis of the relations among these factors. Longitudinal analysis will be done at five year intervals. Simultaneous investigations of the availability and use of hearing aids, as well as the development of a hearing screening questionnaire for use in well-elderly clinics are to be launched in the near future.

Better descriptions of the individual differences in hearing performance with aging should contribute significantly to our understanding of the communication needs of older people which will in turn lead to the availability of more appropriate services.

Library Services for Aging

by Ken Marks, Head of Reference Department, Iowa State University

Citizens of the State of Iowa can utilize the resources of major library collections across the state through a system known as ILITE, the Iowa Library Information

Teletype Exchange. ILITE, sponsored by the State Library Commission of Iowa, attempts to bring people, books, and information together. The system,

organized in 1969, includes the State Library, seven public libraries offering regional library service to every Iowa resident, nine academic libraries, and a university resource library network.

Individuals seeking materials initiate the process through contact with their local library. Requests are passed to the nearest regional library. If unfilled at this level, the requests are sent to the State Library where they are assembled and sent out daily to the other regional libraries, the academic libraries, and the university resource libraries. Books not located at one level of the system are passed on to the next level.

Once an item is found, the owning library mails it directly to the library originally requesting the volume. Loans are normally for a two week period with renewals optional at the discretion of the loaning library. Titles published less than six months prior to the date of the request are not available for loan.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Center Research

The Iowa Gerontology Center Research Committee has awarded seven grants to gerontology students for 1978. The recipients of these awards are:

Frederick A. Feuchter, "Ultrastructure and Concanaval-A Receptor Mobility on Plasma Membranes of Aging Rat Prostatic Epithelial Cells." Department of Anatomy, College of Medicine, University of Iowa.

David R. Rowley, "Age Dependent Responsiveness of Normal and Malignant Prostatic Epithelium in Vitro to Hormonal Stimulation." Department of Anatomy, College of Medicine, University of Iowa.

Lorraine T. Dorfman, "Professors in Retirement," Department of Sociology, University of Iowa.

David Behar, "Depressive Illness in the Elderly: Symptoms, Genetics, and Precipitating Factors." Department of Preventive Medicine, University of Iowa.

Joanne B. Engel, "Psychological Anomie and Religious Identity in Three Groups of Elderly Populations." Department of Psychology, Iowa State University,

Cynthia Dobson, "Age-Appropriate Behavior for Older Men and Women: A Study of Role Definition." Department of Sociology, Iowa State University,

Judith W. Morris, "Decision-Making and Adjustment in Retirement." Department of Family Environment, Iowa State University.

University of Northern Iowa

John Somerville, Associate Director of IGC, recently announced funding for a service or research project in gerontology at the University of Northern Iowa. Any member of the University of Northern Iowa faculty is eligible to apply for the award. Research or service projects which are feasible to complete during the summer of 1978 and which are related directly to the field of gerontology will be considered.

Proposals will be evaluated by a three person committee representing IGC. The deadline for proposals is May 15, 1978.

For further information, please contact John Somerville, Department of Psychology, 440 Baker, University of Northern Iowa, (319) 273-2419.

Visiting Lecturer

The University of Iowa has approved a proposal for a visit by

Sir W. Ferguson Anderson, noted British geriatrician at the University of Glasgow and current president of the British Medical Society. Sir Anderson will visit the University of Iowa on November 6 through 13, 1978 as a participant in the Ida Beam Visiting Professor Program.

Dr. Anderson will give two University-wide lectures during his visit and will participate in activities in the Departments of Family Practice Medicine and Community Dentistry. He will also meet with other researchers and teachers in aging. He was nominated for the visiting professorship by the IGC and the HSRC. Details of Sir Anderson's schedule will be announced as plans develop.

Legislative Action

The legislature should be adjourned by the time this issue is distributed. The appropriations for Aging programs have been passed. Action on property tax relief and mandatory retirement remains.

A property tax relief bill, House File 419, has passed the House and is awaiting debate in the Senate. This bill raised the scale of property tax relief and raises the maximum benefit from \$600 to \$800. It also raises the amount of special assessment relief for low income elderly from 50% to 100%. The impact of this bill has been estimated at \$4.1 million.

A bill to abolish mandatory retirement, House File 419, has passed out of committee in the House, but might not be debated unless there is strong pressure from the public to bring it up for debate.

Appropriations already passed will raise public health nursing/in-home services from \$1.6 to \$2.2 million, senior centers from \$100,000 to \$158,000, and provide small increases for the

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retired lowan employment program and area agency administration.

Health Planner

Lois Haecker has joined the Commission on the Aging as the Health Planner. Ms. Haecker received her B.A. degree in Health Delivery Systems Management from Marycrest College. Her previous work experience includes Center Director of the Commission on the Aging for Senior Iowans, Inc. and as Outreach Coordinator for the Community Health Care, Inc.

Ms. Haecker's duties will include the coordination and monitoring of the Care Review Committees.

Essay Contest

The Society for Health and Human Values has announced an essay contest, "Human Values in the Health Care of the Elderly," which is open to students in the health professions. Entries will be judged on the basis of importance of the issue selected, sensitivity and clarity. A first prize consisting of \$250 cash and three second prizes of \$100 cash will be awarded. Manuscripts must be submitted by July 1, 1978. Further information may be obtained from:

Dr. Ronald McNeur,
Executive Director
Society for Health and
Human Values
1100 Witherspoon Building
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
19107

Meetings and Conferences

The Iowa Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division and the Iowa Commission on the Aging are sponsoring a law day pro-

gram for senior citizens. The program will take place on May 1 at several senior centers and nutrition sites across the state. Attorneys will volunteer 90 minutes to give presentations on such subjects as consumer law, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, probate, estates, wills, landlord tenant problems, taxes, and so forth. Odell McGhee, Legal Services Developer, Commission on the Aging, is coordinator of the event.

The Seventh Annual Older Iowans Arts Festival sponsored by the Commission on the Aging and the Iowa Arts Festival is being held May 1 through May 20 with the exhibit on display in the rotunda of the Capitol in Des Moines. The Arts Festival features works in painting, sculpture, photography, and writing by nonprofessional artists 60 years and older from throughout the state. Awards will be presented at the Governor's Conference on Aging May 16.

The Iowa Association of Area Agencies on Aging annual meeting will be held on May 15 at the Hotel Fort Des Moines in Des Moines. The meeting will feature a number of workshops and the "first annual senior citizens ball." Registration is \$7.50 per person. Contact the Commission on the Aging.

Governor's Conference on Aging (see page 1).

Sixth Annual Conference of the National Caucus/Center Black Aged May 23-27, Stouffer's Dayton Plaza Hotel, Dayton, Ohio. Contact: Ms. Elizabeth Brooks, Conference Coordinator, National Center on Black Aged, 1424 K Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C., 20005. (202) 637-8430.

The Department of Physical Education at the University of Iowa is sponsoring a workshop June 19-23 on the effects of exercise on the aging process and of aging on the ability to ex-

ercise. For more information contact: Dr. David Leslie, Department of Physical Education, 205 Field House, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 52242.

Summer Institute on Aging June 18-23, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia. Contact Preston Jones, Jr., Conference Coordinator, Continuing Education, School of Social Work, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia. (304) 293-3501.

Third Annual Summer Series in Gerontology July 10-21, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania. Contact: Gerontology Center, College of Human Development, Pennsylvania State University.

Midwest Chapter of American College of Sports Medicine Annual Fall Meeting, Theme: Exercise and Aging, October 27-28, Scheman Building, Ames, Iowa. Contact: Jackie Puhl, President Midwest ACSM, 248 Physical Education Building, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. 50011. (515) 294-8473.

Informal luncheon meetings of persons interested in gerontology have been initiated on a monthly basis on the ISU campus. These meetings have advanced communication between university and community people. Contact: Geetha Soloman, 12 Quadrangle, (515) 294-8008.

Publication and Simulation

Human Aging and Dying

by Wilbur Watson and Robert Maxwell, St. Martin Press, 1977, \$12.95 hardbound and \$4.50 paperbound, 143 pages.

A unique study, this book presents sociocultural perspective



on the processes of aging and dying from twenty-six different countries.

THE END OF THE LINE

by Ansell T. Horn, Institute of Gerontology, University of Michigan, \$3.50

This game simulates the interaction between providers of social services and older people in need of help and provides valuable insights into the helper-client relationship. Sixteen to 58 may play, and the game entails two and one half hours playing time.

There is a 54 page leader's manual.

MAGAZINE LISTENING SERVICE

CHOICE Magazine Listening Service, which is sponsored by the nonprofit Lucerna Fund, offers its subscribers eight hours of listening each month—articles, fiction, poetry—from the pages

of the New Yorker, Smithsonian, Esquire, Ms., The New York Times Magazine, and The Wall Street Journal. A 78 rpm speed record player is needed to play the CHOICE selections and may be obtained on a free loan basis from the Library of Congress. Information about a free subscription, as well as an application form for the record player, may be obtained by writing CHOICE, 14 Maple Street, Port Washington, New York 10050.

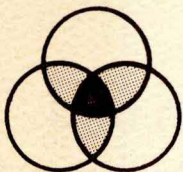
Geriatric Fellowship Program

The Veterans Administration has determined that in the decade between 1980 and 1990 there will be a dramatic increase in the number of veterans 65 years of age and over. Projected numbers indicate an increase from 2.6 million to 5.9 million. The effect of this age shift will create an impact on the medical care requirements of the VA.

As a result of this study, the VA has funding available for a Geriatric Fellowship Program at the VA hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, in cooperation with the University of Kentucky Medical Center. The chief objective is "to train fellows in the clinical, organizational, research, and educational aspects of the care of the older person."

The Director of the program is Matthew C. Darnell, Ph.D., Chief of Intermediate Medicine Service, VA Hospital, Lexington, Kentucky.

Reader's comments and suggestions are welcome. They may be addressed to: Patricia Apt, IGC News Editor, 12 Quadrangle, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011, (515) 294-8008 or Denise Oak, Information Specialist, Iowa Commission on Aging, 415-10th St., Des Moines, Iowa, (515) 281-5187.



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