



# Newsletter

January 2013

Office Phone: 508-564-7543

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## NF Annual Winter Gathering

NF's annual winter luncheon will take place at noon on **Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>** in Fellowship Hall at the First Congregational Church on the village green. We invite all NF members, volunteers and guests to join us for delicious soups and breads and fellowship.

For planning purposes, we are requesting RSVPs. If you would like to attend, just call or email the office. If you will need transportation, please let us know as soon as possible.

Neighborhood Falmouth is providing the luncheon; however, if you'd like to bring something, cookies or bars are welcome.

Please join us for delicious food and great fellowship with others in the NF community. The church is handicapped accessible and an elevator is available.

## SAVE THE DATE: February 27<sup>th</sup>

The next Safety for Seniors seminar has been scheduled by the NF Program Committee for Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Cynthia Bourget, a local Elder Care attorney, will present information and answer questions regarding Medicare and Medicaid.

Additional seminars are being planned by Program Committee members Lou Larrey, Bob Reece, and Les Wilkinson, along with Eric Asendorf and our Executive Directors, for May and October of 2013. Suggestions for topics to be covered may be addressed to these individuals or the NF office.



**Jim Endress, Volunteer**  
*by Mavise Crocker*

As I sat at a table in Jim Endress's home I wasn't sure if I was interviewing him or if I were attending a course he was giving. During the interview I learned far more than I had expected. To begin with, I learned what had been the driving force not only of Jim's career, but of his life. I learned what basic qualities are needed when teaching any subject—qualities not imparted by the teacher, but those required of the student:

- 1) Be sure it takes place in a comfortable learning environment.
- 2) Be sure the student is eager to learn.

3) Let the student teach him- or herself how to learn by asking questions and seeking answers.

Jim is imbued with enthusiasm for teaching teachers to be better at their jobs, no matter what the subject. He himself is well qualified for he has made this his present career—but it didn't start out that way.

Fresh out of high school in Syracuse, New York he joined the Navy in 1954 during the Korean War, where for two years he studied to become an electronic technician. After leaving the Navy, each job he took became a rung on the ladder of his ultimate career. At first, he did indeed become a licensed technician at a local radio station.

He then spent five years with the Carrier Air Conditioning Corporation, followed by twenty-three years at IBM, with its ever-growing involvement with computers. In his early years, there he was working with electric typewriters and punch-card computers; then he became absorbed into the expanding world of computer software.

At the same time, he was also enriching his educational life by taking night courses for a college degree. He claims that it took him all his 23 years at IBM to complete courses at several colleges and matriculate for his third year! After retiring from IBM, Jim's studies continued for the next five years at North Carolina State University where he received first his B.S. in occupational education, then his M.A. in computer-based education, and finally his Ph.D. in education administration.

Here was a man whose career lay in the computer world, but who clearly loved teaching, who loved research and problem solving in the educational field. He developed a philosophy of teaching that placed the burden of learning squarely on the student, as described in the beginning of this interview. His major goal was to train teachers to help their students learn, not by didactic lecturing, but by requiring them to ask questions and finding the answers, thus gaining an education that the students themselves worked out.

Armed with his degrees, Jim Endress felt ready for a second career, to put his educational philosophy

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## NF DATES TO REMEMBER

### **Meet for Breakfast/Coffee: January 7<sup>th</sup>**

Please join us at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>, at Friendly's for a cup of coffee and/or breakfast. It's a great way to begin the week!

### **NF Book Club: January 10<sup>th</sup>**

The NF Book Club is open to members, volunteers, friends and guests. We are currently reading, *Animal, Vegetable, and Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver. Please call the office (508-564-7543) for more information or if you'd like to join us to discuss this book at 2:30 on Thursday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Meet for Lunch: January 16<sup>th</sup>**

Our next monthly luncheon at Coonamesett Inn will be on Wednesday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>, 11:45 a.m. All members, volunteers, and guests are welcome. We order from the menu and individual checks are provided. Please call the office to reserve a place.

### **NF Board Meeting: January 17<sup>th</sup>**

The next Board Meeting will be held at 2:00 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>, in the first-floor Bay Room at the Falmouth Library.

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to good use, but he was already retired! What could the future hold for him? He decided to move north. Asked what drew him north, he answered, "Hugs." New England is where his three grown sons and their families live, and he now enjoys the warmth and companionship of having family near by.

Still a true Navy man, Jim was also drawn to the sea again, so twelve years ago he moved to Falmouth and settled into his final career of teaching. Working with the Coast Guard Auxiliary seemed an ideal fit for Jim, for it involved teaching volunteers boating and public safety, working with over 70 members in the Woods Hole area, and enjoying the company of like-minded people who loved the sea. He joined, he said, for the same reason people join the Masons or any similar organization – for mental stimulation and camaraderie.

Some of Jim's Coast Guard Auxiliary activities have included vessel safety checks, search and rescue, maintaining private navigational aids, learning to be a tour guide at the Nobska light-house, and teaching boating safety.

He also volunteers as a counselor for SCORE, which advises Cape entrepreneurs with the support of the U.S. Small Business, and teaches parts of their seven week course called "Starting a Small Business".

There were two questions I had planned to ask Jim but which now seemed redundant: What has been the most important thing that has made a difference in his life, and what gives him the most satisfaction in his life today? Without question the answer for the first would be a single word: education. The answer to the second question he has answered in two words: education research.

Research has always been a vital part of Jim's approach to solving problems, no matter how simple or complex they may be. His system of providing teachers a better way to help their students learn is a typical example. He has also researched very practical problem solving in everyday life—for instance, how to lower his electric bill.

When he found it impractical to put solar panels on the roof of his house, he decided to reduce his monthly bill by simply using less electricity. He started by installing energy-efficient light bulbs throughout the house; then he stopped using his electric dryer, air-drying his clothes instead; finally, he bought an energy-saving refrigerator. By researching these three simple procedures, he has cut his electric bill in half.

It's obvious that Jim Endress is very happy with this stage of his life. His sons all live on the East Coast -- in Massachusetts, New York and Florida, he has 6 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  grandchildren whom he enjoys immensely, and he considers volunteering for Neighborhood Falmouth as one of his favorite hobbies, right up there with biking and hiking. When asked facetiously what he'd like to be in his next life, he quickly answered, "A retired senior citizen, right from the get go. I love it!" Now that's a happy retiree. Right on, Jim!

## REMEMBERING WESLEY KO AND BOB MASERET

We are sorry to report the recent deaths of two NF members, Wesley Ko and Bob Maseret. We send our condolences to their families and harbor fond memories of both men.

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### SILVER THREADS COLUMN

*Falmouth Enterprise*, December 2012.

**"... and now I think of my life as vintage wine"**

By Barbara Kanellopoulos

"Age," quipped Mark Twain, "is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." It seems like good advice. Seeing that aging is inevitable and—at least for humans—universal, all you need to do is resign yourself. As someone once said, it's better than the alternative. But even Mark Twain, who lived to be seventy-five, would have to admit that growing old is really not that simple.

First of all, adjusting to aging is a slow process. Our inner self is totally unprepared to grow old; it's still adjusting to being middle-aged. It often takes a shock of recognition to get the inner self aligned with that outer, aging self. In my sixties, while hiking with a friend, a niece called to ask, "How are you two old people doing?" It took a moment before it dawned on me that she wasn't joking. Before then, I hadn't seen myself as really old.

Adjusting to his chronological age was difficult for E.B. White, too. When he was seventy, he wrote, "Old age is a special problem for me because I've never been able to shed the mental image I have of myself—a lad of about nineteen."

How we are seen by others also affects our adjustment to aging. Because the social order in Colonial America venerated the elderly, people liked growing old. They actually made themselves look older than they were. Sixteenth century demographics partly accounts for the elevation of old people; fewer than 2% of the population were 65

and over. According to historian David H. Fischer (*Growing Old in America*, Oxford University Press, 1978), the few elderly people that constituted society's elite were respected but not much loved.

American society's relation to its old population has changed dramatically since then. By the mid 1900s, the social ranks shifted and youth trumped age. The writer J.B. Priestley (1894—1984) said, "There was no respect for youth when I was young, and now that I am old, there is no respect for age. I missed it coming and going."

In our own time, age and the aging process are disparaged. Internet and television advertising repeatedly shows the horrors of sagging skin, hair loss, diminished libido, and other ills that aging flesh is heir to. Products like skin cream and hair color are cleverly marketed as "anti-aging." Magazine and newspaper articles insist that old people need not—indeed should not—look old. "Younger Every Day! 365 Ways to Rejuvenate Your Body and Revitalize Your Spirit," shouts one headline. The media's message to older adults is clear: don't resign yourself to growing old. Deny it.

Of course, the message is market-driven, keyed to get the country's forty million older adults to part with their money. But it reflects society's preference for youthfulness and youthful beauty. The media's message works. Some 85,000 men and women sixty-five and older had cosmetic surgery in 2010. It appears that many of us are not adjusting to aging with equanimity.

Prejudice against age groups (particularly the elderly), is known as ageism; it's another way in which society negatively influences our view of aging. The privileging of one age group over another fosters this prejudice. It's not an exaggeration to say that ageism destroys human relationships. Consider the ageism exhibited by former Senator Alan Simpson on YouTube. He called out to the youth of America to oppose the "old coots" on Social Security who are "robbing" the national treasury. Senator Simpson, 81, thinks that young adults will only pay attention to a serious issue if

it's clothed in mockery and ridicule. Pitting one age group against another while insulting both is raising ageism to a new level.

Portrayals of old people as stingy, comical, forgetful, rigid, incompetent, foolish, or out-of-touch are damaging to everyone. They misrepresent the elderly and they prejudice the young. Because unexamined stereotypes are pervasive, skilled people who choose to work beyond retirement age are often reticent to reveal their ages.

To counter the view that the aging process entails nothing but loss, nothing but diminishment, we need only look at the contributions that older adults make to the Falmouth community. They are Falmouth's "social glue." They serve on town committees and commissions, they work in soup kitchens and service centers, they form networks to protect and support vulnerable neighbors, they vote, they support local government and participate in civic affairs, they donate to charity, they attend churches, they take care of children, they work to protect the environment, they shop locally and use local services, they are leaders of clubs and groups. Their economic and social contributions are substantial.

With a little editing, Mark Twain's witticism makes a lot of sense. Age *is* mind over matter. We don't mind aging when our lives matter.

We gratefully acknowledge support from the following merchants and organizations:

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