
HCFA/CMS

ALUMNI NEWS

SUMMER 2012 (Vol. 18 No. 3)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, Memorial Day and the 4th of July have come and gone and Labor Day seems right around the corner. Let's all enjoy the best of the rest of the summer.

I am pleased that the association continues to attract new members. On page 2 you will see a list of 7 new members, bringing the current membership to an all time high of 642. By providing a Member Directory, a quarterly newsletter, and e-mail messages about happenings at CMS, we promote a continuing connection between CMS (formerly HCFA) and its retirees, both at the central office and regional office levels. We certainly strive to provide varying information of interest to all of our retirees.

In this issue you will find items about the COLA Count (looks like so far we are actually in line for a 1.5% COLA), a report on the successful Spring/Summer Cookout, a report in this issue and a separate flier about, an OKTOBERFEST on October 10, a piece by Michael Gartner with his views on life, and senior management announcements. We also feature an item about a potential St. Patrick's Day get together (your thoughts are being sought. We again serve up some whimsical pieces in the Komedie Korner. There are lots of items that hopefully will be of interest to you.

We are also enclosing a new 2012 Member Directory, as we try to do with each Summer issue of the HCFA/CMS Alumni News.

I want to wish you all a Wonderful Rest Of The Summer and continued happiness, good health and prosperity in retirement.



William L Engelhardt

HCFA/CMS ALUMNI NEWS

Published four times a year for the members of the Health Care Financing Administration /Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (HCFA/CMS) Alumni Association

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DUE DATES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

Fall Issue – September 28, 2012

Winter Issue – December 28, 2012

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NEW MEMBERS

The Association extends a hearty "Welcome Aboard" to the following new members:

Melvin Bulkley
Richard A DeMeo
Carolyn R Hill
Denise Pinder Jones
Mary Keogh
Patricia (Trish) Moore
William Saunders

We now have 642 active members.

MEMBERSHIP SEARCH

As always, we acknowledge that there are many HCFA/CMS retirees that we have not been able to reach to tell them about the Alumni Association and invite them to join. We continue to ask for your assistance in spreading the message about us to them. If you know of any retiree that is not a member, please let them know about us and tell them how to contact us by telephone, snail mail or e-mail (all of that information can be found on page 2 of this issue). We will be very happy to send, either electronically or via snail mail, anyone the enrollment form and further information about membership. And Bill Engelhardt says you can always e-mail him personally at wengelhardt@adelphia.net for faster response (as the office e-mail is only accessed weekly).

SOCIAL SECURITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

We'd like to again remind members that we also have a link to our sister alumni, the Social Security Alumni Association, web site on our web site. The actual URL for it is "<http://www.ssaanational.org>" but you can just click on the link on our page. Many HCFA and/or CMS retirees also worked for the Social Security Administration somewhere along the line, and are eligible for membership in both alumni associations.

SSAEAA

We'd again like to remind members that we do have a link to the Social Security Administration Employee Activities Association (SSAEAA) on our web site. The actual URL for it is "<http://ssaeaa.org>" but you can just click on the link on our page. HCFA/CMS retirees are automatically members of the SSAEAA and are eligible to participate in discount purchases.

COLA COUNT

Through nine months of the counting period toward the January 2013 federal retiree cost of living adjustment, the inflation index used to set that adjustment stands at 1.3 percentage points. The new CPI-W figure for June 2012 was 226.036. The average CPI-W for the third-quarter of 2011 was 223.233. This is the new reference figure for determining the 2013 COLA. The annual COLA count measures the change in the index's average from one-third calendar quarter to the next. October, November and December saw modest drops in the COLA count but January and February each saw a monthly change of plus 0.5%, March saw a gain of 0.89%, April saw a gain of 0.31%, May saw a drop of 0.18% and June saw a drop of 0.24% ending up with a net gain of 1.3% for the counting period. There are three months left in the counting period. So far, we have a 2013 COLA of 1.3%.

SPRING/SUMMER COOKOUT

Some 53 Alumni members and friends (a record setting number) came to the spring/summer cookout at the home of alumni member Lillian Lehnert in Fulton, Maryland on June 15 and everyone had a wonderful time. This set an all time attendance record. Lillian was a most gracious host and we can never thank her enough for her hospitality. Many of the partygoers brought hot or cold covered dishes and/or desserts. Food was plentiful and fantastic. Allan Platt cooked up the meat in fine fashion and the liquid refreshment was in good supply. The weather was great for the entire day, picture perfect. A lot of reminiscing, story telling and just great conversation filled the air. We hope to repeat the wonderful experience with another great picnic next year. We hope to see even more of you next year.

OKTOBERFEST

The Spring/Summer Cookout was such a huge success that Lillian Lehnert has graciously offered to host an Oktoberfest on October 10, 2012. The enclosed flier provides the details and contains the signup form. Plan to celebrate the Fall Festival and the joys of retirement From Noon until 4:00 p.m. on October 10. Say hello to old friends and just have a wonderful time. The menu will consist of wursts, hot dogs, potato salad, beans, sauerkraut, beer, and German desserts.

POTENTIAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

We are exploring the possibility of holding an Alumni get together for St. Patrick's' Day next year (probably not on the exact day but near it as the exact day is a Sunday and most places would be a mob scene). Kelsey's Restaurant and Irish Pub on Baltimore National Pike in Ellicott City MD is a possible site. We are seeking expressions of interest and suggestions for possible sites. Please e-mail us at HCFAALUM@cms.hhs.gov or call (410) 786-3819 (leave a

message if no one is there when you call) to give us your input.

PHASED RETIREMENT IN, HIGHER CONTRIBUTIONS OUT

From FEDweek Weekly Newsletter

In combining and passing two high-priority bills, Congress dropped several proposals to require higher retirement contributions by all employees but backed a plan to create a "phased retirement" authority. Bills extending some transportation programs and a student loan rate reduction were merged, but the final version that has now been signed by President Obama (P.L. 112-141) does not include a higher contributions requirement that had been proposed in each as a revenue raiser – in one version, an additional 1.2 percent of salary, in another 1.5, both phased in. However, the measure does include language that the Senate initially added to the transportation bill and that a House committee passed separately, allowing agencies to offer retirement-eligible employees the opportunity to continue working part-time while drawing both a proportionate salary and a proportionate annuity, without reduction.

The presumption in the phased retirement language is that an affected retiree typically would work half-time but the working time could range between one to four days a week. Similarly, the presumption is that such persons would spend a fifth of their working time mentoring younger employees, but that also could be waived. When the individual fully retired, the annuity would be recalculated to take the additional service into account. Due to the complexities involving various benefits issues, getting such a program operating is expected to take some time, however, potentially around a year after enactment, according to a recent CBO analysis. That report also projected that the benefit would be used relatively sparsely, by 1,000 retirees a year, who would average working three years in phased retirement status. However, even at that rate, CBO projected 10-year savings in reduced retirement benefits and increased income into the federal retirement fund from continued employment totaling \$450 million—a key factor in the plan's enactment.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION RETURNS TO CMS

CMS delightedly announced the official return of the Human Resource (HR) function on May 21, when the new HR Center began providing the full range of professional HR services to CMS. The announcement indicated:

“A transition team has been working on an aggressive schedule to stand up an HR Center that will deliver outstanding customer service as its primary goal. The initial preparations are complete, and the staff is ready to serve our customers. The HR Center will continue to expand over the next several months as we fully staff the functions.”

CMS PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

Jonathan Blum has assumed the responsibilities of Principal Deputy Administrator of CMS, while continuing to serve as the Director of the Center for Medicare. Jonathan joined CMS in March 2009 when he assumed responsibility for the Medicare portfolio. Prior to joining CMS, Jon worked at the Office of Management and Budget, the Senate Finance Committee and at Avalere Health, a private consulting company.

REORGANIZATION

To position CMS to better focus on three key areas: strategic planning, Medicare and Medicaid innovation, and enterprise management, a reorganization involving the Center for Strategic Planning (CSP), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI), and the Chief Operating Officer (COO) is being implemented. The Office of Enterprise Management (OEM) is being created within the COO to ensure core functions are aligned under common leadership and share a consistent vision.

Center for Strategic Planning (CSP)

CSP will continue to assist the Administrator in developing and monitoring the Agency's strategic plan. CSP will advise the Administrator regarding the consistency of policy and business operation with the strategic vision and goals. CSP will also provide leadership and direction to the new State Innovations Group in CMMI.

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI)

CMMI will continue to test innovative payment and service delivery models to reduce program expenditures.

Pursuant to the reorganization, CMMI will:

Establish the Division of Advanced Primary Care and the Division of Accountable Care Organization Populations in the Seamless Care Models Group to focus on population- directed accountable care organizations.

Revise the title of the Community Improvement Care Models Group to the Preventive Care Models Group to accurately reflect its responsibilities in identifying innovations in health care aimed at making families and communities healthier.

Establish the State Innovations Group to partner with States in developing innovative service delivery and multi-payer payment models that drive healthcare delivery system transformation.

Chief Operating Officer (COO)

The COO facilitates the coordination, integration and execution of strategies, policies and activities across CMS components, including new program initiatives.

Pursuant to the reorganization, the COO will:

Establish the Office of Enterprise Management (OEM) to serve as CMS' primary resource on project management and integration, development and coordination of strategic frameworks and execution, review, analysis, and development of business requirements for enterprise level business solutions and information technology investments.

Under the new OEM structure, assume responsibility for the Office of Project Management and Performance (OPMP) and the Office of E-Health Standards and Services (OEES).

Under the new OEM structure, direct the following functions that were previously part of CSP: Performance Reporting and Enterprise Business Planning.

Under the new OEM structure, establish the Office of Information Products and Data Analysis, which will consolidate the Data Development and Services Group, the Policy and Data Analysis Group, and the Information Dissemination Group from CSP.

Realign the Privacy Board function from CSP to the Privacy Policy and Compliance Group, also under OEM.

Center for Medicare

CM will continue to serve as CMS' focal point for the formulation, coordination, integration, implementation, and evaluation of national Medicare program policies and operations.

Pursuant to the reorganization, CM will become responsible for the Medicare Health Outcomes Survey function from CSP.

Mike Harsh has been appointed as the interim Director of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO) following the resignation of Steve Larson from his position as Deputy Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Director of the CCIIO. Mike Harsh has been serving as the Director of the Office of Health Reform.

Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner said, "Please join me in thanking Steve for his dedicated leadership and service and giving Mike your full support as we continue our important work together. I am especially pleased we are able to have a strong leadership team in place at CMS as we move forward and am excited about all that we will continue to do to make a difference in the lives of millions of Americans."

OCSQ BECOMES CCSQ

The name of the Office of Clinical Standards and Quality (OCSQ) has been changed to the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality (CCSQ). The new Center remains responsible for the increasing breadth and importance of quality, patient safety, evidence-based coverage, clinical standards, survey and certification, and programs linking quality to payment. These national programs impact millions of beneficiaries and improve the quality of the nation's health system.

The quality programs led by the Center are a major and growing emphasis for the Agency. While their name has changed, the mission and commitment of CCSQ remain the same and the existing management team remains intact.

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS (OIS)

Terris King has been appointed Deputy Director for the Office of Information Systems (OIS). Terris King joined the OIS leadership team in January. Prior to joining OIS, Terris was the Acting Director of the CMS Office of Minority Health. Terris also served as CMS' Chief Negotiator for the Master Labor Agreement. Terris was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2000. From 2005 through 2011 Terris served as Deputy Director of the Office of Clinical Standards and Quality (OCSQ).

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CLINICAL STANDARDS IN QUALITY (OCSQ)

Wes Perich has been appointed permanent Deputy Director of the Office of Clinical Standards in Quality (OCSQ). Wes Perich has been serving as the Acting Deputy Director of the Office of Clinical Standards in Quality (OCSQ) since March 2011. Previously, Wes served as Deputy Director, Office of Financial Management. As CMS' designated Budget Officer, he was responsible for funds control activities for a budget in excess of \$800 billion. Prior to joining CMS, Wes held a number of increasingly responsible positions within the Social Security Administration (SSA) beginning in the field office structure and culminating in the SSA Office of Budget, where he served as Director of Program Budget. Wes was recruited to the Health Care Financing Administration in 1999 and was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2004. Wes earned a Bachelor's Degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and attended the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh.

ADMINISTRATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has announced the creation of The Administration for Community Living within the Department of Health and Human Services. This new Operating Division brings together the Administration on Aging, the Office on Disability, and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities into a single agency that supports cross-cutting initiatives and efforts

focused on the unique needs of individual groups, such as children with developmental disabilities or seniors who need assistance to continue to live in their communities. The Administration for Community Living will seek to enhance and improve the broad range of support that individuals may need to live with respect and dignity as full members of their communities. This support extends well beyond health care and includes the availability of appropriate housing, education, meaningful relationships, and social participation. More information of the Administration for Community Living can be found at <http://hhs.gov/acl>.

Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging, will serve as the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living, while also retaining her duties as Assistant Secretary for Aging.

Henry Claypool, the Director of the Office on Disability, will take on the role of Principal Deputy Administrator and continue to serve as the Secretary's Senior Advisor on Disability Policy.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Chief Operating Officer's Achievement Award has been presented to the following individuals:

Anna McCourt, of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight in Baltimore MD. Anna is being recognized for developing and deploying the CAP caseworker tool; providing technical support to CAPs and Exchange grantees; and drafting numerous multi-million dollar funding opportunity announcements.

Trinia Hunt, of the Denver Regional Office. Trinia is being recognized for her willingness to step up and volunteer for special projects and never ending requests for immediate information. She also serves as a tremendous resource for all of her internal and external customers, while maintaining a much heavier than average workload.

Christina Eberhart, of the Office of Acquisitions and Grants Management in Baltimore MD. Christina is being recognized for identifying an HHSAR requirement for GSA Schedule competitions that is inconsistent with the intent of the streamlined procedures available under FAR Part 8.

Catherine Desa, of the San Francisco Regional Office. Catherine is being recognized for unsurpassed dedication to protecting the health and safety of beneficiaries through outstanding production, customer service and program oversight.

Alesia Hovatter, of the Office of Clinical Standards and Quality in Baltimore MD. Alesia is being recognized for her outstanding dedication and achievement in coordinating the revisions to the Hospital Conditions of Participation and updating the internal and external CSG web pages.

Jennifer Magyar, of the Seattle Regional Office. Jennifer is being recognized for her leadership on the HITECH and ACO initiatives, which includes collaborating on outreach and education, reviewing ACO applications, and answering questions from the provider community.

Richard Colangelo, of the Center for Program Integrity in Baltimore MD. Richard is being recognized for this honor for valuable work on numerous special assignments of importance to the Medicaid Integrity Group, and for outstanding performance of his regular Medicaid Integrity Specialist work.

Harriet Goldstein, of the Boston Regional Office. Harriet is being recognized for this honor for years of exemplary performance through your tenacity, initiative, commitment, and demonstration of the CMS core values.

Erica Breese, of the Center for Strategic Planning in Baltimore MD. Erica is being recognized for this honor for outstanding efforts in writing and coordinating the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Final Rule for Section 6002 of the Affordable Care Act.

Bryan Licata, of the New York Regional Office. Bryan is being recognized for this honor for outstanding dedication and personal commitment to the effective management of the Medicare Advantage Program through his leadership, technical skills, customer service, and unconditional teamwork.

Rebecca “Goldy” Austen, of the Center for Medicaid & CHIP Services in Baltimore MD. Goldy is being recognized for this honor for outstanding program services enabling CMS to exceed expectations in multiple State Medicaid programs including CHIP operations for both current initiatives and future challenges.

Linda Brown, of the Philadelphia Regional Office. Linda is being recognized for this honor for her leadership, dedication, and technical skills in managing the Transplant Hospital and Organ Procurement Program in the Regional Office.

Kathy Branch, of the Office of Operations Management in Baltimore MD. Kathy is being recognized for this honor for her leadership and dedication during the HR Services transition.

Erick Bowen, of the Atlanta Regional Office. Erick is being recognized for this honor for his outstanding work and extra efforts to ensure that the voice of Medicare beneficiaries was heard.

GARTNER'S VIEWS ON LIFE

This is a wonderful piece by Michael Gartner, editor of newspapers large and small and former president of NBC News. In 1997, he won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing. It is well worth reading, and a few good chuckles are guaranteed. Here goes.

My father never drove a car. Well, that's not quite right. I should say I never saw him drive a car. He quit driving in 1927, when he was 25 years old, and the last car he drove was a 1926 Whippet.

"In those days," he told me when he was in his 90s, "to drive a car you had to do things with your hands, and do things with your feet, and look every which way, and I decided you could walk through life and enjoy it or drive through life and miss it."

At which point my mother, a sometimes salty Irishwoman, chimed in: "Oh, bull----!" she said. "He hit a horse."

"Well," my father said, "there was that, too."

So my brother and I grew up in a household without a car. The neighbors all had cars -- the Kollingses next door had a green 1941 Dodge, the VanLaningshams across the street a gray 1936 Plymouth, the Hopsons two doors down a black 1941 Ford -- but we had none.

My father, a newspaperman in Des Moines, would take the streetcar to work and, often as not, walk the 3 miles home. If he took the streetcar home, my mother and brother and I would walk the three blocks to the streetcar stop, meet him and walk home together.

My brother, David, was born in 1935, and I was born in 1938, and sometimes, at dinner, we'd ask how come all the neighbors had cars but we had none. "No one in the family drives," my mother would explain, and that was that.

But, sometimes, my father would say, "But as soon as one of you boys turns 16, we'll get one." It was as if he wasn't sure which one of us would turn 16 first.

But, sure enough, my brother turned 16 before I did, so in 1951 my parents bought a used 1950 Chevrolet from a friend who ran the parts department at a Chevy dealership downtown.

It was a four-door, white model, stick shift, fender skirts, loaded with everything, and, since my parents didn't drive, it more or less became my brother's car.

Having a car but not being able to drive didn't bother my father, but it didn't make sense to my mother.

So in 1952, when she was 43 years old, she asked a friend to teach her to drive. She learned in a nearby cemetery, the place where I learned to drive the following year and where, a generation later, I took my two sons to practice driving. The cemetery probably was my father's idea. "Who can your mother hurt in the cemetery?" I remember him saying more than once.

For the next 45 years or so, until she was 90, my mother was the driver in the family. Neither she nor my father had any sense of direction, but he loaded up on maps -- though they seldom left the city limits -- and appointed himself navigator. It seemed to work.

Still, they both continued to walk a lot. My mother was a devout Catholic, and my father an equally devout agnostic, an arrangement that didn't seem to bother either of them through their 75 years of marriage (Yes, 75 years, and they were deeply in love the entire time).

He retired when he was 70, and nearly every morning for the next 20 years or so, he would walk with her the mile to St. Augustin's Church. She would walk down and sit in the front pew, and he would wait in the back until he saw which of the parish's two priests was on duty that morning. If it was the pastor, my father then would go out and take a 2-mile walk, meeting my mother at the end of the service and walking her home. If it was the assistant pastor, he'd take just a 1-mile walk and then head back to the church. He called the priests "Father Fast" and "Father Slow."

After he retired, my father almost always accompanied my mother whenever she drove anywhere, even if he had no reason to go along. If she were going to the beauty parlor, he'd sit in the car and read, or go take a stroll or, if it was summer, have her keep the engine running so he could listen to the Cubs game on the radio. In the evening, then, when I'd stop by, he'd explain: "The Cubs lost again. The millionaire on second base made a bad throw to the millionaire on first base, so the multimillionaire on third base scored."

If she were going to the grocery store, he would go along to carry the bags out -- and to make sure she loaded up on ice cream. As I said, he was always the navigator, and once, when he was 95 and she was 88 and still driving, he said to me, "Do you want to know the secret of a long life?"

"I guess so," I said, knowing it probably would be something bizarre. "No left turns," he said. "What?" I asked. "No left turns," he repeated. "Several years ago, your mother and I read an article that said most accidents that old people are in happen when they turn left in front of oncoming traffic.

As you get older, your eyesight worsens, and you can lose your depth perception, it said. So your mother and I decided never again to make a left turn."

"What?" I said again. "No left turns," he said. "Think about it. Three rights are the same as a left, and that's a lot safer. So we always make three rights."

"You're kidding!" I said, and I turned to my mother for support. "No," she said, "your father is right. We make three rights. It works."

But then she added: "Except when your father loses count." I was driving at the time, and I almost drove off the road as I started laughing. "Loses count?" I asked.

"Yes," my father admitted, "that sometimes happens. But it's not a problem. You just make seven rights, and you're okay again."

I couldn't resist. "Do you ever go for 11?" I asked. "No," he said " If we miss it at seven, we just come home and call it a bad day. Besides, nothing in life is so important it can't be put off another day or another week."

My mother was never in an accident, but one evening she handed me her car keys and said she had decided to quit driving. That was in 1999, when she was 90. She lived four more years, until 2003. My father died the next year, at 102.

They both died in the bungalow they had moved into in 1937 and bought a few years later for \$3,000 (Sixty years later, my brother and I paid \$8,000 to have a shower put in the tiny bathroom -- the house had never had one. My father would have died then and there if he knew the shower cost nearly three times what he paid for the house).

He continued to walk daily -- he had me get him a treadmill when he was 101 because he was afraid he'd fall on the icy sidewalks but wanted to keep exercising -- and he was of sound mind and sound body until the moment he died.

One September afternoon in 2004, he and my son went with me when I had to give a talk in a neighboring town, and it was clear to all three of us that he was wearing out, though we had the usual wide-ranging conversation about politics and newspapers and things in the news.

A few weeks earlier, he had told my son, "You know, Mike, the first hundred years are a lot easier than the second hundred." At one point in our drive that Saturday, he said, "You know, I'm probably not going to live much longer."

"You're probably right," I said. "Why would you say that?" He countered, somewhat irritated. "Because you're 102 years old," I said.

"Yes," he said, "you're right." He stayed in bed all the next day. That night, I suggested to my son and daughter that we sit up with him through the night. He appreciated it, he said, though at one point, apparently seeing us look gloomy, he said: "I would like to make an announcement. No one in this room is dead yet"

An hour or so later, he spoke his last words: "I want you to know," he said, clearly and lucidly, "that I am in no pain. I am very comfortable. And I have had as happy a life as anyone on this

earth could ever have." A short time later, he died.

I miss him a lot, and I think about him a lot. I've wondered now and then how it was that my family and I were so lucky that he lived so long. I can't figure out if it was because he walked through life, Or because he quit taking left turns.

Life is too short to wake up with regrets. So love the people who treat you right. Forget about the ones who don't. Believe everything happens for a reason. If you get a chance, take it and if it changes your life, let it. Nobody said life would be easy, they just promised it would most likely be worth it."

KOMEDY KORNER

BARBIE DOLLS FOR THE AGED!

From JumboJoke.com

Finally, a line of Barbie® dolls I can relate to. At long last, here are some **New!** Barbie dolls to coincide with her aging gracefully. These are a bit more realistic:

1. Bifocals Barbie. Comes with her own set of blended-lens fashion frames in six wild colors (half-frames too!), neck chain, and large-print editions of Vogue and Martha Stewart Living.
2. Hot Flash Barbie. Press Barbie's bellybutton and watch her face turn beet red while tiny drops of perspiration appear on her forehead. Comes with handheld fan and tiny tissues.
3. Facial Hair Barbie. As Barbie's hormone levels shift, see her whiskers grow. Available with teeny tweezers and magnifying mirror.
4. Flabby Arms Barbie. Hide Barbie's droopy triceps with these new, roomier-sleeved gowns. Good news on the tummy front, two-MuMus with tummy-support panels are included.
5. Bunion Barbie. Years of disco dancing in stiletto heels have definitely taken their toll on Barbie's dainty arched feet. Soothe her sores with the pumice stone and plasters, then slip on soft terry mules.
6. No-More-Wrinkles Barbie. Erase those pesky crow's-feet and lip lines with a tube of Skin Sparkle-Spackle, from Barbie's own line of exclusive age-blasting cosmetics.
7. Soccer Mom Barbie. All that experience as a cheerleader is really paying off as Barbie dusts off her old high school megaphone to root for Babs and Ken, Jr. Comes with minivan in robin-egg blue or white and cooler filled with doughnut holes and fruit punch.

8. Midlife Crisis Barbie. It's time to ditch Ken. Barbie needs a change, and Alonzo (her personal trainer) is just what the doctor ordered, along with Prozac. They're hopping in her new red Miata and heading for the Napa Valley to open a B&B. Includes a real tape of "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do."

9. Divorced Barbie. Sells for \$999.99, but it comes with all of Ken's stuff, including his house, car and boat.

10. Recovery Barbie. Too many parties have finally caught up with the ultimate party girl. Now she does Twelve Steps instead of dance steps. Clean and sober, she's going to meetings religiously. Comes with a little copy of The Big Book and a six-pack of Diet Coke.

11. Post-Menopausal Barbie. This Barbie wets her pants when she sneezes, forgets where she puts things, and cries a lot. She is sick and tired of Ken sitting on the couch watching the tube, clicking through the channels. Comes with Depends and Kleenex. As a bonus this year, the book "Getting In Touch with Your Inner Self" is included.

THE AGING CONSPIRACY

Have you noticed that stairs are getting steeper?

Groceries are heavier.

And, everything is farther away.

Yesterday I walked to the corner and I was dumbfounded to discover how long our street had become!

And, you know, people are less considerate now, especially the young ones. They speak in whispers all the time! If you ask them to speak up they just keep repeating themselves, endlessly mouthing the same silent message until they're red in the face! What do they think I am, a lip reader?

I also think they are much younger than I was at the same age. On the other hand, people my own age are so much older than I am. I ran into an old friend the other day and she has aged so much that she didn't even recognize me.

I got to thinking about the poor dear while I was combing my hair this morning, and in doing so, I glanced at my own reflection. Well, REALLY NOW- even mirrors are not made the way they used to be!

Another thing, everyone drives so fast today!

You're risking life and limb if you happen to pull onto the freeway in front of them. All I can say is, their brakes must wear out awfully fast, the way I see them screech and swerve in my rear view mirror.

The people who make bathroom scales are pulling the same prank, but in reverse. Do they think I actually believe the number I see on that dial? HA! I would never let myself weigh that much! Just who do these people think they're fooling?

I'd like to call up someone in authority to report what's going on -- but the telephone company is in on the conspiracy too: they've printed the phone books in such small type that no one could ever find a number in here!

All I can do is pass along this warning: We are under attack! Unless something drastic happens, pretty soon everyone will have to suffer these awful indignities.

BENEFITS OF BEING OVER 60

Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.

People call at 9 PM and ask, "Did I wake you?"

People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.

There is nothing left to learn the hard way.

You can eat dinner at 4 P.M.

You enjoy hearing about other peoples operations.

You get into heated arguments about pension plans.

You have a party and the neighbors don't even realize it.

You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.

You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.

You sing along with elevator music.

Your eyes won't get much worse.

Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.

You can't remember who sent you this list.

BUS TOURS

Groups of Americans were traveling by tour bus through Holland. As they stopped at a cheese farm, a young guide led them through the process of cheese making, explaining that goat's milk was used. She showed the group a lovely hillside where many goats were grazing. "These" she explained, "Are the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produce."

She then asked, "What do you do in America with your old goats?"

A spry old gentleman answered, "They send us on bus tours!"

GARDENING WITH GRANDMA

A teenage granddaughter came downstairs for her date with this see-through blouse on and no bra. Her grandmother just pitched a fit, telling her not to dare go out like that! The teenager told her "Loosen up Grams. These are modern times. You gotta let your rose buds show!" And out she went.

The next day the teenager came down stairs, and the grandmother was sitting there with no top on. The teenager wanted to die. She explained to her grandmother that she had friends coming over and that it was just not appropriate.

The grandmother said, "Loosen up, Sweetie. If you can show off your rose buds, then I can display my hanging baskets."

Don't Mess With Senior Citizens!

SENIOR'S WISDOM

- The best way to forget all your troubles is to wear tight shoes.
- The nice part about living in a small town is that when you don't know what you're doing, someone else does.
- The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat are really good friends.
- Amazing! You hang something in your closet for a while and it shrinks two sizes!
- I read this article that said the typical symptoms of stress are: eating too much, impulse buying, and driving too fast. Are they kidding? That is my idea of a perfect day! -- I know what Victoria's Secret is. The secret is that nobody older than 30 can fit into their stuff.

OBITUARIES

TRIBUTE TO PAUL CALVIN RETTIG

By Ron Carlson

Paul and I were best of friends especially during the BHI era. He was one of the brightest individuals I ever had the privilege of working with when I headed up the Part B Reimbursement Policy Branch. Beyond his professional life, he was an active member (as was his family) in a church based undertaking sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland during the early days of Columbia. We would touch base from time to time as we both moved along to other positions in health care related jobs. I'm so sorry to hear of his passing; that said, there's no question but that he had a full and rich life. He was one of those who truly made a positive difference that affected the lives of many! He will be missed.

IN MEMORIAM

**The Alumni Association respectfully acknowledges
the passing of the following
Alumni/Employees/Spouses and expresses its
sympathy to family members:**

**THOMAS D COFORIO (4/11/12)*
LUIGI DISTEFANO (5/13/12)**
PATRICIA ALEXANDER-FRENCH (5/7/12)**
HERBERT MONROE POLLOCK (4/29/12)**
PAUL CALVIN RETTIG (5/15/12)***
RALPH SETTE (5/12/12)****
RONALD C. ZEMAN (5/11/12)****

*HCFA/CMS Alumni Member

**HCFA/CMS Retiree

***SSA Retiree from Medicare Program

****CMS Employee

**If you are aware of any other deaths of Alumni please notify the editorial staff
July 2012**