

# How to get an AED for your community

March 5, 2007, is a day Joe Gould will never forget. It started out like any other day. He went to work and at lunchtime headed to the YMCA in Augusta for his daily workout.

"I started my workout and went about what I normally would do. I go on the elliptical trainer and then do a cool-down session on a bike," Gould said on the phone recently. "Part of the story is only hearsay because I wasn't there. I worked out and had switched over to the bike. I had a heart attack on the bike during the cool-down session."



DIANE ATWOOD

Joe, who was only in his mid-40s, says he was on the floor "dead" for five to seven minutes. A man started doing CPR. Other people ran for Rob Pekins, the aquatics director. He rushed to Joe's side with an automatic external defibrillator, or AED, in his hands, which Pekins used -- twice -- along with CPR on him.

A report on cardiac arrest released by the Institute of Medicine, or IOM, in June 2015 stresses that every minute counts when someone goes into cardiac arrest. If the person isn't treated within 10 minutes, the chance of survival is almost zero.

Joe says it took the fire department 15 minutes to arrive. He's convinced that if there wasn't an AED machine at the Y, he would have been a dead man.

In most cases, like Joe's, a heart attack doesn't happen with emergency responders nearby. Any one of us could play a crucial role in saving a life. But how many of us know what to do?

## What to do

If you suspect a heart attack, the most important thing to do is call 911 immediately.

If the person is in cardiac arrest -- the heart has stopped beating -- follow these steps:

- Call 911.
- Administer hands-only CPR.
- Use an AED if one is available.

Among other things, the IOM recommends that the public be taught to recognize cardiac arrest and learn how to do CPR and use an AED.

In Maine, Medical Care Development Public Health and the Maine Cardiovascular Health Council are trying to address those recommendations. Last year, they got a grant to buy and place hundreds of AEDs in rural Maine communities.

Tina Love, a registered nurse and Project Manager at MCD Public Health, says their first step is getting the word out about the project. The second step? "Having people start noticing where there are AEDs in their communities and then getting trained -- whether they see a video or we link them up with their local EMS or fire department."

## What's an AED?

AED, or automated external defibrillator, is a lightweight, portable machine that delivers an electric shock to the heart. It's designed so that nonmedical people can use it by following simple directions. A recorded voice walks you through each step you need to take.

## Where's the nearest AED in your community?

Tina Love says there should be an AED in your town office, library, schools that don't have

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All but one of the 36 units at the Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage (above) have been sold, four years after the groundbreaking for the project. Arthur H. Whitman (top left), 89, who lives in a unit with his daughter Beth Whitman (left) and their dog, Pippin, talks about the Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage recently. Chris Meyer (top right, left) helps Jeffrey Mabee clean mud from his boots after they finished planting garlic in the community garden. They are both residents at the village where many building and gardening projects are done by the people who own units in the community.

# The right balance

## Why cohousing communities are attracting midlife Mainers

BY MEG HASKELL  
BDN STAFF

When Truman Welch, an Episcopal minister, was ready to retire from his long-time position as a parish priest in an urban neighborhood outside of Boston, he faced a dilemma.

"I had spent 43 years living in very close community with people of all ages," he said. "When I retired, I was drawn to the idea of a life that provided the possibility of solitude. But I also needed some community around me. I was anxious about leading an isolated life."

At Two Echo Cohousing in Brunswick, Welch, who is 69, found just the right balance: an intimate neighborhood of like-minded individuals and families of all ages, living in a village-like setting in the Maine countryside and committed to a philosophy of collaborative problem solving, sustainable living and good-neighborliness.

According to the Cohousing Association of the United States, cohousing is a form of "inten-

tional community" characterized by privately owned homes clustered around shared space and, usually, surrounded by undeveloped land. This clustered design not only reduces the environmental impact of the project but also intentionally promotes social interaction among the residents.

The goal is to bring neighbors together regularly for meals, celebrations and other group activities, as well as for the serious business of collaborative community building, policy making and problem solving. Most groups aim for consensus in all decisions, from permitting a member to build a porch to restricting gun ownership on the property. This deliberative process allows for a satisfying resolution on issues affecting the group, proponents say, though it can prove frustrating for those seeking quick action.

Maine has just two established cohousing communities: Two Echo Cohousing in Brunswick, which took shape in the late 1990s, and Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage in Belfast, which broke ground in 2011.

## Two Echo

At Two Echo Cohousing, a total of 27 homes, ranging in size from 700 square feet to 2,300 square feet and including a few duplexes, are clustered at the edge of a large field. The houses are connected by a tree-lined gravel roadway and surrounded by more than 70 acres of rolling fields and woods. There is a traditional New England feel to the setting. About 45 adults live here, along with 28 youngsters from infancy through college age.

At the center stands the common house, a spacious, two-story building with a kitchen and dining room used for weekly shared dinners, birthday parties and other special events. The common house also provides space for meetings, a children's playroom and overflow sleeping quarters for visitors.

Most houses at Two Echo have no adjoining garage, no driveway and no on-street parking. Residents leave their vehicles in assigned garage units outside the loop of homes and walk or bicycle a short distance

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# Sanctifying the passage of our years

BY MEG HASKELL  
BDN STAFF

The predictable passages of advancing age come to us all, Rabbi Richard Address said, first as caregivers for aging loved ones and later as we journey closer to life's end ourselves.

"It's important to take stock of your life at every age," he said. "It's precious. It's a gift. Don't waste it."

Address is a proponent of what he calls "sacred aging," his phi-

losophy that people of any faith background -- or none -- can find strength and support in spiritual texts and rituals that confer meaning and dignity on the milestones of our advancing years.

He will deliver presentations in Greater Bangor next weekend with the goal of drawing family caregivers to his



Address

talks, along with health care providers, spiritual leaders and others who interact regularly with the aging and the elderly.

Taking a spiritual approach to caregiving confers an air of sacrament to the everyday tasks of caregiving, he said in a recent interview.

"It can make the difference between a growth-oriented process and curling up in a ball," said Address, who is 70 and lives in southern New Jersey.

One familiar reference, he said,

is the Fifth Commandment, found in the Old Testament book of Exodus: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you." The message is plain enough, he said, but the reminder that caring for an elderly parent is a sacred opportunity, as well as a practical obligation, can elevate a caregiver's perspective.

Other situations are more complex, such as caring for a relative

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We need to tell you something (and you're going to love it!):

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This section of your Bangor Daily News is now NEXT

Award-winning journalist Meg Haskell has rejoined the BDN to chronicle the experiences, challenges and issues facing the "Baby Boom" generation -- a generation poised to shape Maine's future. Join Meg every weekend as she takes a look at what's NEXT.

