Women outlive men but suffer long years of disability

BY LISA RAPAPORT REUTERS

Women may have a longer life expectancy than men, but they are spending more of their golden years

living with disabilities, a

U.S. study finds. Researchers analyzed studies of people 65 and older enrolled in Medicare, the U.S. health program for the elderly. The studies asked how often disabilities kept people from fully participating in daily activities and then followed them over time to see how long they lived. They looked at data from 1982, 2004 and

Over that period, the age an average 65-year-old woman could expect to live to increased by two years, from 82.5 years to 85.5 years, the analysis found. Men don't live as long, but they gained more years — five expanding their life expectancy at age 65 to a further 19 years from 14 years.

But women shouldn't necessarily celebrate getting those extra birthdays.

After age 65, women consistently spent an estimated 30 percent of their remaining years with a disability. Men, on the other

22 percent of their remain- ties — declined for both like that they recover, but Lustig, a family medicine involved in the study, added and saw that decrease to 19 percent by the end of the

It's hard to say exactly why women may experience more years of disability, but some of this might be because of unequal progress in treating their health conditions or different shifts in gender lifestyle habits such as smoking and exercise over time, said lead study author Vicki Freedman of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

"Older women also have fewer economic resources than men on average so they may not be as able to accommodate their declines in functioning when they do occur," Freedman said life. by email.

"Whatever the reason, this is an important trend to continue to monitor as the large Baby Boom cohorts continue to reach old age," Freedman added. Disabilities might make

it harder to complete daily activities such as dressing, bathing, cooking, shopping or driving.

report in the American Journal of Public Health.

In 1982, 13.2 percent of women and 10.7 percent of men experienced severe disability after age 65. By 2011, this dropped to about 10 percent of women and 7 percent of men.

One limitation of the study is its reliance on data from just three individual years, which made it impossible to explore how disability onset or recovery might influence life expectancy, the authors note. They also limited the analysis of disability to mobility and completion of daily activities, which excludes other impairments that can influence health and quality of

It's possible, though, that the same heartiness that makes women live longer than men also contributes to their greater propensity toward disability in their later years, said Dr. James Kirkland, director of the Robert and Arlene Kogod Center on Aging at the Mayo Clinic.

"Women are biologically Severe disability — when more hearty than men so people had trouble with at instead of dying from a hand, started out spending least three different activi- heart attack or something

ing years after 65 disabled women and men over the they recover disabled," said study period, researchers Kirkland, who wasn't involved in the study.

Many women may also assume caretaker roles that leave less time for recreational, social and selffulfilling activities that might help keep disability

specialist with the Cleveland Clinic in Warrensville Heights, Ohio.

At the same time, some women may also lack the financial resources to stop working as they get older or to pay for services they need, particularly if they at bay, noted Dr. Lili are poor, Lustig, who wasn't

by email. They may also struggle to pay for basic needs like food, medicine and housing.

'Women are not prepared for the golden years, Lustig said. "The idea of the idyllic retirement portrayed on TV does not



The What Is It in the March 5 edition of the **Bangor Daily News** was correctly identified as an antique glass smoke bell by Andrea Pelletier of Fort Fairfield, Vicki Stanley of Mattawamkeag and Virgil Fowles of Brooks. The smoke bell was suspended above the chimney on a hanging kerosene lamp in order to prevent the oily black smoke from soiling the ceilina.



Dog believed lost at sea turns up on island used by US Navy

REUTERS

A dog believed to have drowned after disappearing from a fishing boat off the California coast five weeks ago was found on an island owned by the U.S. Navy and will be reunited with her owner on Thursday evening, the Navy said.

Luna, a blue-eyed German shepherd-husky mix, apparently swam 2 miles to San Clemente Island, off the San Diego coast, where Navy employees found her on Tuesday, Naval Base Coronado

nik said. The island is a Navy Navy personnel, who also training base.

"It was a long haul for a puppy across treacherous terrain," DeMunnik said on Thursday. "She was a little thinner, but none the worse for wear.'

Luna, who is about 18 months old, was on a fishing boat with her owner Nick Haworth when she went missing before dawn on Feb. 10 while Haworth and a crew member hauled in a catch, DeMunnik said.

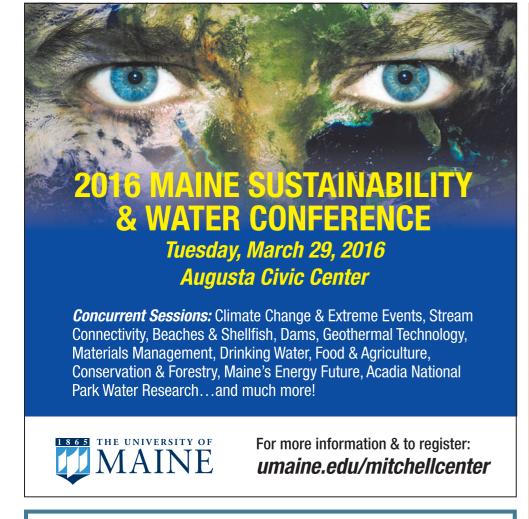
Haworth searched the wa-

spokeswoman Sandy DeMunters for two days backed by searched the island for a week, DeMunnik said

> The San Diego fisherman presumed Luna was dead 10 days after she went missing, posting photos of the dog on Facebook and writing "RIP

> Luna likely spent no more than a day in the water. She was found sitting along a road on the island.

> "Beyond stoked to have Luna back," Haworth wrote on Facebook. "I always knew she was a warrior."





- Supplement your retirement
- Pay off your mortgage
- Buy a home
- Lifetime monthly payment

Heidi Eastman

Reverse Mortgage Advisor NMLS #1200643 207-299-7283 heastman@rfslends.com www.rfslends.com









*contact info may be used for marketing/BDN promotions in the future