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Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley Records

1979-1994

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Amherst, Massachusetts chapter of the national Gray Panther organization that sponsored the weekly Amherst Vigil for Peace and Justice, tackled such issues as fair and affordable housing for people of all ages, nursing home reform, Social Security policy, universal healthcare, safe-sex, and age discrimination, and also worked to improve the everyday life of senior citizens and the community at large, often collaborating with other local organizations to address world peace, environmental concerns,

improved child care, educational opportunities, and handicapped accessibility. Records include charter, by-laws, histories and mission statements, meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, financial reports, fundraising materials, membership lists, a membership questionnaire, newsletters, press releases, leaflets, clippings, a scrapbook, T-shirts, and program files, that document the founding and activities of the Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley.

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Background on Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley

The Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley were based in Amherst, Massachusetts and chartered in 1980 as a local chapter of the national Gray Panther organization founded in 1970 by Maggie Kuhn. Kuhn was determined to form an activist group with a few friends who, like she, were forced into retirement. Rather than become a special interest group for the elderly, they formed an intergenerational group to promote peace, justice and equality.

For nearly twenty years, the Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley organized local and national initiatives and partnered with other groups in their reform efforts. In addition to their role as the original sponsors of the long-running weekly Amherst Vigil for Peace and Justice, the Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley tackled such issues as fair and affordable housing for people of all ages, nursing home reform, Social Security policy, universal healthcare, safe-sex, and age discrimination. They also worked to improve the everyday life of senior citizens and the community at large, often collaborating with other local organizations to address world peace, environmental concerns, improved child care, educational opportunities, and handicapped accessibility.

The group was administered by a local convener and a steering committee in accordance with national Gray Panther by-laws.

The Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley disbanded in late 1998.

Scope of collection

Charter, by-laws, histories and mission statements, meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, financial reports, fundraising materials, membership lists, a membership questionnaire, newsletters, press releases, leaflets, clippings, a scrapbook, T-shirts, and program files, that document the founding and activities of the Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley. The records reveal the group's frequent interactions with social and political movements, both local and international, of the time. The leadership of local activists Margaret Holt, Winifred Hillicker, Alan Root and Mazie Hough is evident throughout the collection. Correspondence files document the organization's ongoing functions and include letters to and from Mary Brydon-Miller, the group's first convener, and legislators. Programs and Events files document the group's organized efforts for, among others, affordable housing, cessation of Anthrax research at University of Massachusetts, study of Canadian health care, elder abuse, health care and Medicaid reform, protest of Louis Foods supermarket relocation, Maggie Kuhn's 1984 visit, Martin Luther King celebrations, Middle East/Gulf War, nursing home reform, veteran's issues, and peace vigils. Program files are comprised of correspondence, publicity materials, petitions, and clippings. Affiliated Group files contain primarily printed materials (newsletters, flyers, brochures, government reports) that chronicle issues of interest as well as organizations, including other Gray Panther chapters, with which the group interacted.

Records are organized into the five following series, including Administrative, Financial, Programs/Events, Affiliated Groups, and Publications. Materials are arranged chronologically in each grouping.

Arrangement

This collection is organized into five series:

Series 1. Administrative

Series 2. Financial

Series 3. Programs/Events

Series 4. Affiliated Groups

Series 5. Publications

Inventory

Series 1. Administrative

1979-1992

Charter, by-laws, founding documents

1979-1986

Box 1: 1

Histories and mission statements

n.d.

Box 1: 2

Meeting agendas and minutes

1980-1981

Box 1: 3

Meeting agendas and minutes

1982

Box 1: 4

Meeting agendas and minutes

1984

Box 1: 5

Meeting agendas and minutes

1985 January-July

Box 1: 6

Meeting agendas and minutes

1985 August-December

Box 1: 7

Meeting agendas and minutes

1986 January-June

Box 1: 8

Meeting agendas and minutes

1986 July-December

Box 2: 9

Meeting agendas and minutes

1987

Box 2: 10

Meeting agendas and minutes

1988

Box 2: 11

Meeting agendas and minutes

1989

Box 2: 12

Meeting agendas and minutes

1990

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Meeting agendas and minutes

1991

Box 2: 14

Meeting agendas and minutes

1992, n.d.

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1989

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1981

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Correspondence

n.d.

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Correspondence

1981

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Correspondence

1983

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Correspondence

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Correspondence

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Correspondence

1985 July-December

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Correspondence

1986

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Correspondence

1987

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Correspondence

1988

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Correspondence

1989

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Correspondence

1990

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Correspondence

1991

Box 3: 30

Correspondence

1992

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Bills and receipts
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Bills and receipts
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Box 6: 54
Elder Advocacy Network

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Health care/Medicaid reform
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Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Processing Information

Processed by Betsy Carpenter.

Language:

English

Acknowledgments

Encoding funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Copyright and Use (More information)

Cite as: Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley Records (MS 468). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

Health care--Massachusetts.
Holt, Margaret.
Kuhn, Maggie.
Older people--Massachusetts.
Peace movements--Massachusetts.

Contributors

Gray Panthers of the Pioneer Valley **[main entry]**
Brydon-Miller, Mary.

Link to similar SCUA collections

Civil rights
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Peace
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