

# Harper Center Bulletin



Williamstown Council on Aging

## JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



Let us begin this cycle by wishing everyone a Happy and healthy New Year!

When I was a lot younger I found the passage of the years to be a scary experience. I didn't quite get the "See you Next Year" bit on New Years Eve and was rather nonplussed by this particular declaration. One year seemed to be soooo long and they weren't going to see me until next year!?! Aaagh! As I aged and in true "Out with the Old, in with the New" I welcomed the arrival of the New Year and in particular the opening festivities with all their promise. As I got older, kids intruded on the affair and it became more of a dinner out with the family. Today? Who cares? I will likely be asleep by midnight. Another day, another page. Unless, of course, there's something more interesting happening somewhere out there...

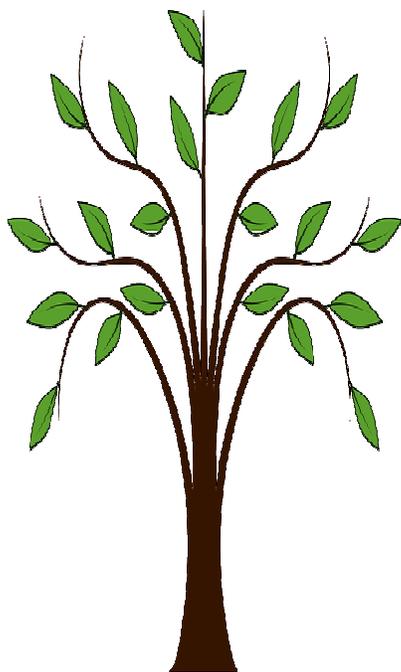
Happy New Year all!!!



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Hours of operation Monday  
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We've been serving Town  
elders and their families  
since 1966!

## AARP TAX AIDE

It's time for us to begin taking reservations for the annual AARP Tax Aide program. Beginning Monday January 9th we will accept reservations for individuals of moderate means to get some help completing and filing 2016 state and federal income taxes for FREE. Sessions with a tax aide will be a bit longer this year subsequent to a change in paperwork, preliminary guesses are that they'll take an hour and a half to process so plan on it. Participants should bring all pertinent 2016 documentation and a copy of your 2015 returns to the session. It is absolutely first come, first serve and reservations are required. You can schedule yours by calling us here at 458.8250 and we'll make arrangements for you.

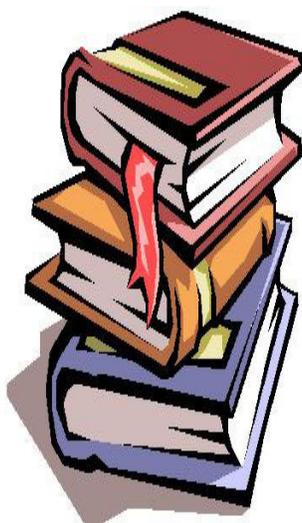


## HOSPICE

A couple of months ago we had asked our friend Eleanor Derby-Kilfoyle from Hospice of Western and Central Massachusetts to come and give us an overview of hospice, their programs, their supports for caregivers and family of terminally ill people, all the nuts and bolts of this very valuable program. Unfortunately we had to postpone the conversation with Eleanor until this year. So she will be here on Friday afternoon, January 13th at 12:30 to talk with us.

Yes, it is Friday the 13th.

Hospice is a very important option to know about. They provide a very personal level of care driven by the needs of patients and caregivers. They provide a different type of care actually as it's centered on making terminally ill individuals comfortable and helping families get through very stressful times. Ellie will answer any questions you have. Pizza first though and we appreciate reservations for this portion...



## BOOKS

I love books. There are those in my life who will tell you that I have too many books, but, you know...my mother taught me that books are friends and should be treated as such. So I do, new ones, old ones, there is nothing quite like reading an actual book. Kindle has its place but will never replace the heft and page turning experience that an actual book provides.

Our book discussion group, curated by Peter Mehlin, meets on the first Friday monthly at the Milne Library. We have the reading materials for the first two sessions and subsequent months will follow in the February newsletter. In January, the book is "The Reserve" by Russell Banks and the book for February is Isabelle Allende's "Portrait in Sepia". You can contact Peter Mehlin for information via email at [pmehlin@aol.com](mailto:pmehlin@aol.com)



## MEMORY CAFÉ

Yes, there will be a Memory Café in 2017! We've had a successful partnership with BFAIR hosting the program here at the Harper Center and our collaboration will continue with this program at least through June 2017.

Our first gathering of the new year will be on January 17th, 9:00 to 11:00, and then followed by lunch under the new schedule. Memory Café morphs the main hall at Harper into an actual café complete with coffee, juices and café style snacks where folks with memory deficits and their caregivers can relax and share common experiences with others who share the same life challenges. Join us or tell someone you know!

## A MATTER OF BALANCE...

The MOB is back and will be in the house on January 12th. We'll be sponsoring the Matter of Balance program once more here at Harper, this time with our friends Amanda and Bret from the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. This is an "evidence based" program where you compare what you know about yourself at the beginning versus what you know at the end and evaluate your progress. Oh, it's very user friendly, there are no tests, no structured surveys, it's all about you evaluating your own progress. There will be eight sessions beginning on Thursday January 12nd and culminating on Thursday March 2. These classes focus on developing personal routines aimed at the goal of, simply put, NO FALLING. Participants will learn balance enhancing exercises to improve balance and flexibility. You'll have helpful discussion on strategy to avoid falls and to reduce fear of falling among participants which can be a challenge on it's own. Each class is 2 hours long and runs from 1:00 to 3:00. Materials, refreshments and good conversation will be provided. You bring yourself, just let us know you're coming so we can plan accordingly! Did I tell you that it's FREE? Call us here at Harper for information, 458.8250. Oh. And tell all your friends too!



## GETTING IN SHAPE AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

Just think about the calorie count which will present itself the day after we've been through the Christmas and New Years break...astronomical for some of us. Maybe even greater than the GNP of some small countries! The annual food fest is perhaps avoidable but why bother. Some of the good we will see during this time of year only appears around these few weeks. Eggnog is a favorite of mine! We all have our food demons. How to undo the holiday season damage to our waist line is another story. On Friday January 29th Lisa King, nutritionist from Williamstown Commons, will be here to talk about the problem and will be bringing executive Chef Steve Betti with her to prepare a hearty, and healthy meal to accompany the conversation! The menu is stir fry and should be quite yummy!



Sign up OK?

## REMEMBER! THE SCHEDULE IS CHANGING!

There will be lunch from Elder Services on Tuesday starting January 3rd and conversely none on Friday. Official Harper Center Bingo dates will be on the second and fourth Tuesdays-bookends to the big Bingo extravaganza in Clarksburg. There will be occasional other game dates as well...Our normal special program dates will be moving from Tuesday to Friday, which has turned out to be a better day for presenters and musicians as well. This means that our special luncheons, cookouts and pizza dates will now be on Friday as well. The changes will have no impact upon French Toast Friday...

So-if you're a normal lunch participant, be sure to reserve with Pat for Tuesdays! And look for our Friday sign up sheets too!



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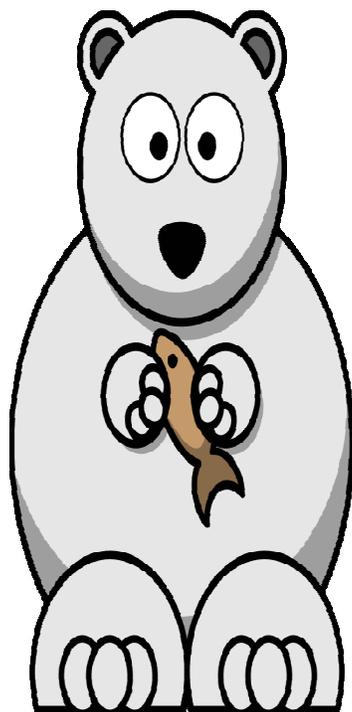
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## PAGE FOUR NEWS

If it snows the physical activity groups— balance class, exercise, tai chi and yoga will be cancelled IF there is no school. We had to come up with a new means of telling everybody so this is how it will work. School closings are announced early on the local WNAW radio station and appear on the rolling screens of the local cable access television programming. If you hear “no school” then no class. Should you miss the announcement, you’re welcome to call and we’ll let you know what the status is. The afternoon activities may be a different story. Frequently morning snow issues are resolved by late morning and there is a possibility that the show will go on, especially if the afternoon itself and roads are clear. Check with us...

Now, if the roads are bad in the morning, there is a good chance that we will not operate the van that day. Even clear roads here do not mean smooth sailing, we’re a hilly country and these big vehicles don’t like snow. We’d rather err on the side of caution and stay off the roads, clear of snow on a hill does not mean it’s not slippery. Safety first always! Questions? Feel free to ask!



Serena Merrill, our foot care provider will be here at the Harper Center on Tuesday, January 17th to clip those toenails and rub those aching feet. That’s the good news. The bad news is that she’s booked for the month. She is making appointments for her next trip through town in February . Want to see her in February? Schedule now folks, her spaces fill fast!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be here at the Harper Center on Wednesday, January 18th at 10:30 to help anyone who has issues with their health care insurance. Appointments are appreciated. Peg is also available for individual consultations at other times by scheduling her through the COA office at 458-8250.

The monthly Blood Pressure Clinic, sponsored by our friends at Sweet Brook, will resume in January on the 10th, the second Tuesday immediately after lunch and right before Bingo...magic cookies return! And maybe a little magic for those cards eh?

January Brown Bag offering—sponsored by our friends from the Foodbank of Western Massachusetts—will be on Friday January 27th—the normal day following a couple of holiday disruption months! Brown Bag is a monthly offering of shelf stable foods and fruits and veggies in season. Interested in the details? Call us here at Harper, 458-8250 and we’ll be happy to help!

