

Harper Center Bulletin

HARPER CENTER BULLETIN #234

MAY 1ST, 2014

Williamstown Council on Aging

May 2014 Newsletter

A cold winter has given away to the month of May. It's warm, the flowers are out, soon we'll be cutting the grass. And all the golf courses are open. What else can I say?

I am pretty sure by now that everyone has heard the news that the BMC people are planning to reopen the Emergency Room at the NARH and may purchase the entire facility. I guess we all knew that this might happen eventually and it's good news.

There still are hoops to jump through, the license business and of course the matter of bankruptcy proceedings are still out there lurking in the background. Hopefully they'll be a non-issue for us. So let's be optimistic that this business will soon pass without issue and be resolved soon.

In the meanwhile, Mass College of Liberal Arts have opened their campus wellness center to the community as an "urgent care" center to be staffed by former NARH personnel. Urgent care is different than emergency care, if it's an emergency call 911. I guess it would be like the difference between a sprained ankle and a stroke, you know what I mean!

Finally, it's May so Happy Mothers Day!



The Williamstown
Council on Aging

The Harper Center,
118 Church Street,
Williamstown 01267

We're open from
8:00 to 4:00 Monday
through Friday.

Phone: 413.458.8250

Fax: 413.458.5156

Email:

bogrady@williamstown.net

These crafters have accomplished a lot!

A few months ago, Maggie and friends decided to focus their energy upon creating objects for sale with all the proceeds going directly into the Friendship Club coffers. They –Maggie Guiden, Pat Picard, Renate Schafer, Janet Winn and Dot Sweet– met weekly thru the late fall and winter creating the knitted and sewn goodies on the table in the main hall. To date they have raised over \$600 for their cause. Hey– at an average of about \$5 per article, that is a lot of money. They'll meet in May to wrap up and will cease operations for summer fun returning in September to start again with new ideas. In the mean time, I think their efforts deserve a round of applause!

Southern Vermont Medical center



Immediately after NARH closed we realized that the local hospital option was gone, perhaps not forever, but at least for the moment. It has caused concern, instead of a five minute ride, it's longer. And as NARH was a full service operation-what next? It has been all over the media. We all know about BMC and the great options available down in Pittsfield. There is another option to think about; just a few miles North of Williamstown is the Southern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington. They're a full service hospital with an impressive array of available service options-Cardiology, Ob/Gyn, Pediatrics, Orthopedics, Gastroenterology, Cancer Care-Surgery. Sound familiar?

On Tuesday May 6, Jim Trimarchi from SVMC will be here to tell us about their facility and what they are able to offer for medical services. He can answer any questions you may have about them including insurance coverage issues. Cookout at noon, conversation at 12:30. join us!

Java Judy on Tuesday for lunch

Miss Java told us that she had safely landed on her feet and would be back with us to play some time in May...ah poetry! Anyway-Judy will be here at the Harper Center on Tuesday May 27th with her new employer- Wendy Carver from the Multiple Sclerosis Resource of the Tri-State Area. MS is a neurological disease damaging nerve endings and interfering with transmission of signals from the brain to other parts of the body. MS affects every person differently-some folks have walking difficulties, some become fatigued, vision issues, bowel and bladder problems and depression are some of the manifestations of this currently incurable disease. Research is key and advancements have been made but more is needed. The mission of the Tri State Resource folks is to help people with MS through education, support, information and referral. The local office is at 85 Main Street in North Adams.

So join us for a conversation with Judy and Wendy- it's the day after Memorial Day - we'll have salads and open face sandwiches at noon, presentation at 12:30.

Medical Transport

The good news is that the doctors who were slated to be lost in the wake of the NARH disaster are staying and will remain in service for us. The family practice are staying in their building at the airport and the ob/gyn folks are moving to Adams. This was one very large source of stress relieved and should you need to see them, call and we'll make arrangements as usual. People needing treatment at the BMC can ride to Pittsfield with the BCAC van- they'll be leaving from the former Nassif drugs site in North Adams and returning twice daily. If you contact us here we'll bring you to the collection point and pick you up in the afternoon, or answer questions about the service. Arrangements will be made for return home trips after hours if needed. We do not yet know what the potential demand for transport to SVMC is but we'll figure that out when the need arises.



Berkshire VNA

One of my first thoughts after the Northern Berkshire Health announcement was for the many people who were part of the VNA and Hospice, part of NBH. They were eliminated in the fall too. We always assumed that the patients would be ok, there would be a transfer of care in an orderly fashion but what about the staff? We're so used to seeing them around town, in and out of peoples houses and even here at Harper- throughout the years they did lots of programs with us in this building. It was especially shocking for me- I have worked with them in one capacity or another for my entire professional life and at one point I was involved with their professional advisory group. That folks, was back in the late 80's. And then, suddenly Poof! Outta here, adios. I had a chance to talk with some of the people we all know, nurses mostly and wow, it was tough. In the end, a silver lining as the Berkshire VNA came to the rescue, hired staff and assumed the clients without disruption to the patients. Great news! On May 20th Pat Trembley, director of the BVNA, will be here to talk about the transition, where they are and all those important details. Food first, at noon, menu TBA, conversation at 12:30.



The importance of salad

Guess what people? May is National Salad month! Bet that you didn't know that! I didn't. So we're going to have a luncheon session and talk about the benefits of eating salad! Someone who eats lots of salad can tell you that they are delicious if you do them right. On Thursday May 29th, Colleen Nerney from Williamstown Commons will be here with some friends, bringing salad, recipe cards and a lot of information on healthy eating. They'll address the benefits of regularly eating your greens, highlight what a salad can do for you and as it's also national Blood Pressure month, will discuss how a healthy diet including salad will help your overall well being. We'll be combining our green conversation with Elder Services regular lunch-they'll be having some Swedish Meatballs with noodles-along with salad this will make for a great meal. Note IT'S AT NOON! Not the usual 11:30! So sign up in the usual spot and we'll take it from there!



Kira



Our buddy Kira Breard from Amedisys will be here at Harper on Thursday May 22nd and will be talking with us about skin protection in the summer. Ya, it's that season and we want to tell you about the danger the sun can pose before the season actually lands on us! You know, I had a bit of surgery a year ago to remove some cancerous lesion from hanging in the sun without screen for a few years and it's no joke. I used to stand around baseball fields a bit in the summer before sunscreen became popular and, well, I just roast. Never wore the stuff and when I did, it got in my eyes so...I was lucky. Others have not been so.

Kira will bring sunscreen samples. We'll bring food. 1:00!

Williamstown Council on Aging

The Harper Center
118 Church Street
Williamstown, MA 01267

Phone: 413.458.8250
Fax: 413.458.5156
Email:
bogrady@williamstown.net

You can also find us on the web at the Williamstown Municipal website—www.williamstown.net and on Facebook, www.facebook.com/williamstowncouncilonaging

Every once in awhile we hear from folks who would like us to include contributions from members of the community and we have frequently signaled that we would be willing to publish folks poems and smaller works. At this writing, we have heard from one person who gave us a short poem to put out and we will next month. Maybe we'll have a couple more? Maybe we'll have to do a special edition sometime...

We'd also like to remind everyone that May is the home of two significant Williamstown centered events—the annual town election on May 13th and Town Meeting which is scheduled for the 20th. There are 2 select board positions up for grabs this year and quite a few items of interest to all appearing on the annual town warrant. One of the strengths of our democracy is our absolute ability to express ourselves by voting. Every year the townheads in specific directions because of the will of its citizens. There is always a lot to talk about in this little town of ours so get out there and express your opinion. If you don't participate, well, don't complain!

Page four news and notes

Our foot care magician, Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday May 20th to work wonders on your feet, clipping nails, reducing calluses and massaging the soreness out. Everyone who has worked with her tells me how wonderful it is. If you haven't met Serena, you might want to think about it.

For those of you who have found yourselves to be challenged by the very technical stuff which comprises our health care insurance paperwork, our health care insurance guru, SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks, will be in the house on Wednesday May 21st at 10:30 to help. Appointments are not necessary but appreciated; Peg is also available for individual consultation outside of normal hours by contacting us in the COA office at 458-8250.

The monthly Blood Pressure Clinic, sponsored by our friends from Sweetbrook, is postponed for May. Our friends from the friendship Club are hosting their annual spring luncheon off campus and none of us will be here at the usually appointed time. The BP clinic will resume in June, same time and channel...

Finally, the monthly Brown Bag, sponsored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday May 23rd. Brown Bag is literally a brown paper sack filled with shelf stable foods and fresh fruits and veggies in season. Interested? Contact us here at Harper at 458-8250, and we'll help you thru the minimal applications process!