

HARPER CENTER BULLETIN

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WILLIAMSTOWN COUNCIL ON
AGING

Harper Center Bulletin # 244

March 2015 Newsletter

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The Williamstown Council on Aging

The Harper Center

118 Church Street

Williamstown 01267 MA

Telephone:

413.458.8250

Fax:

413.458.5156

Email: bogrady@williamstown.net

It's March and there is a ton of snow out there! Ain't it beautiful? Now if we could get away with seventy degree temps and snow at the same time would anyone be happy? Anyway, it's been great for skiing and building snow forts. Some of us had to shovel but whatever right? We choose to live here, nobody makes us stay...

March is always a goofy weather month. First it's cold and then it's spring like and then we get a blizzard. Flowers pop out and get snowed under or drown in rain and mud. Weather forecasters really earn their money in March. No way I would want that job!

This is going to be an interesting month. The Chronic Pain seminar will continue and wrap up at the end of the month, we're launching Aging Mastery and the Age Friendly survey will be out as well. We have a great group coming to usher in the Spring and all of the activities in hiatus for February will return to action. We'll schedule a hot fudge date too-how about the 26th at 12:30?

Anyway, it will be a busy month. Be careful of mud, tis the season. And Happy St. Pat's as well!



Senior Tax Work Off

Y'all will remember that we passed an article at Town Meeting last year enabling us to offer some work in exchange for a little tax relief. Here at Harper, we're looking for an enthusiastic individual to coordinate active movement programs for Williamstown seniors under the program. The right person will help to create new walking, running and bike paths within town for seniors. They'll recruit and lead groups and competitive teams, track individual progress and keep records. Other healthy activity ideas are very welcome. Yes, creativity is encouraged! Some communication with outside agencies and institutions will be required. This is a great opportunity to work outside, lead groups and hoist trophies when we win...More information? Call us. 458.8250

Age Friendly Communities



Berkshire County has a population rate of about 20% over 65. When compared to the rest of the state population which is at approximately 14%- a big number for us. If you add people aged 50 and over then the number is between 40 and 50% in some communities. So is Berkshire County an aging locale? You betcha!

On St Patrick's Day, while there will be no Leprechauns hopping about, we'll get together and talk about the future. This little group I have been involved with-colleagues and friends concerned about the age demographics we are seeing here in Berkshire have devised a small (ok, not really small but very important) survey we'd like to have folks complete. Amanda Chilson from the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition will be our guest for the event and she'll be helping us to tell you all about our age friendly initiative including Mass In Motion, a very special program. We have a really neat short video to show you too. So, lunch will be at noon, menu TBD next week and conversation at 12:30. This is an important conversation so y'all come!



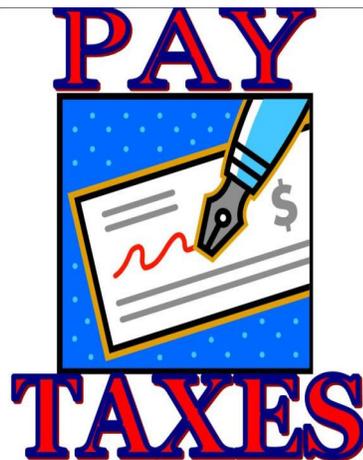
Emerald Isle

Alright, we all know that the official start of any season doesn't actually happen until we party it in...so on Tuesday March 31st we'll officially welcome the arrival of spring with a cookout and music from the Irish band Emerald Isle. You guys remember them right? They were here at Harper exactly a year ago and rocked the house with a bevy of Irish tunes, classic standards and some newer materials, including a couple of original pieces from the artists themselves.

So bring your dancing shoes, wear some green and bring a healthy appetite- this will be the first cookout of the spring!

The food will be flying off the grill at noon-and the menu will be announced later-and the band will play at 1:00. We'd like to acknowledge our friend Ida from Berkshire housing for arranging the band!

AARP Tax Assistance



The great news about this years AARP Tax Aide program is that there are increased slots available on Tuesday evening. The bad news; there will NOT be Saturday sessions this year. If you've been hoping for a Saturday morning we'll arrange the same service for you on a Tuesday. As of today, we've seen more people to date than last year. Tuesday works just fine!

Tax sessions are approximately an hour in length and appointments are definitely required. You can make one by calling us at 458.8250. Participants are asked to bring their 2013 tax return paperwork and all pertinent papers for 2014 tax filing. These sessions are open to tax payers of any age group with moderate income. Special attention will be paid to senior filers. This program is free of charge.

Aging Mastery starts on the 13th

We've been talking about this program for the last two months and finally we're ready to start. We'll be gathering for the first get together at the Spitzer Center in North Adams to introduce the program and then hosting traveling classes between Spitzer, the Adams Visitors Center and the Harper Center on alternating weeks until the program ends in May. This is an excellent opportunity to participate in a cutting edge program which offers rewards for participation in the form of prizes and for the long haul in potentially life enhancing knowledge. It's true that making a couple changes in lifestyle whether it be sleep, diet or exercise can make a difference for the good. This series will also address fall prevention, financial health, Alzheimer's responses and mental health awareness as well. There is a commitment, it's a 12 week session but it's only an hour a week. Wouldn't you trade an hour for the potential to do something great for yourself? Reservations are required and the actual curriculum is available here at Harper. Interested? 458.8250. Give us a call!

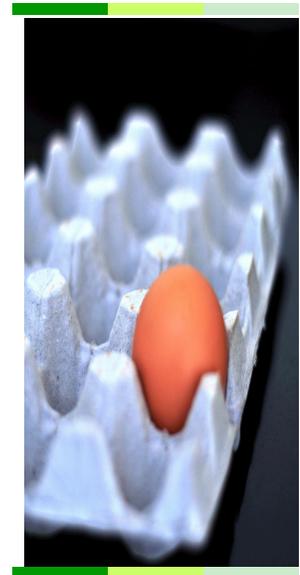


Food Events

The First Day of Spring will be on a Friday this year-March 20th. Now whether the season follows or not is anyone's guess, we could get 5 more weeks of winter. Anyway, in honor of the arrival of the season we'll do FTF but spring it up with some berries-strawberries, blue berries, good stuff like that. Maybe a melon on the side and how about OJ?

Now BOT isn't possible this month. The Aging Mastery class has the space on the last Fridays we'll have to hold that thought until next month...

One of these days we want to do spaghetti and meatballs, not sure which one, haven't seen the lunch menu for March yet. Watch for pasta fest day!



Activity resumption...

Some of the activities which have been suspended for one reason or another will be resuming during March. Youlin, our Tai Chi instructor will be back from her trip to China and formal instruction will begin again starting on March 9th. That's a Monday so it will be the instructional class for new people. Interested in a balance enhancing activity? Come in and we'll teach you!

Oil Painting resumes on Tuesdays as well, I believe that the first class back is the 10th. Want to paint?

Now several people have inquired about hosting a low impact Zumba class. I don't do Zumba so I can only imagine low impact. Let Marion or me know if you're interested and we'll see what we can find.



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**The Harper Center
118 Church Street
Williamstown, MA 01267**

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Fax: 413.458.5156

Email:

bogrady@williamstown.net

Ok, here are the latest grouping of housekeeping notes! First off, the building will be closed and there will be no programming here on March 24th, it's our annual strip and wax day . This means no chair scraping starting Wednesday the 25th. Right? Need to keep them pretty for awhile!

Tuesday March 3rd will be a brief gathering of the Crafty Seniors group, Maggie is wanting to complete some pillows for the Friendship Club sale table-which will return in March. I suspect that you'll also be talking about the spring creativity campaign. Group members will be having lunch here. Otherwise there won't be activities as we'll be doing our annual spring cleaning...

When I was a kid, school Friday lunches were often fish sticks. I borrowed the idea from my past a couple years ago and introduced the humble fish stick at Bingo as the main snack during this time of year. I know, there are lots of people who don't eat meat on Friday during Lent and fish sticks were very popular so we'll reprise in honor of our friends who are Lenting.

Finally, in observance of all those peeps who like to listen to speakers or musicians, remember to be quiet during a performance or talk. We don't want to be seen as rude now do we?

Page Four News and Notes.



Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday March 17th to work wonders on your feet, clipping nails, reducing calluses and massaging the soreness out. But...sorry folks, she's booked for the month folks, sign up for April now!

For those of you who have found yourselves to be challenged by the very technical stuff which comprises our health care insurance paperwork system, our health care insurance guru, SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks, will be in the house on Wednesday March 18th 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-officially sponsored by our friends from Sweetbrook will take place on Tuesday March 10th, at noon immediately preceding the Friendship Club meeting. MAGIC COOKIE DAY!!!!

Finally, the monthly Brown Bag, sponsored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday March 27th. 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!

Happy March!