

Harper Center Bulletin

Williamstown Council on Aging

Harper Center Bulletin #178

January 1st, 2010

January 2010 Newsletter

Happy New Year to one and all! I find myself looking at the “2010” notation and feel that it’s just a little bit freaky if I do say so myself. Yeah, , seems like it ought to be nineteen something...

So here we are, actually all the way around the calendar again and back to winter. I’m looking out side as I write this and while the sun is shining in a brilliant blue sky, the ground is predictably covered with snow and it’s cold. So it’s January right? Yup. But now the days are getting longer and each day it’s a little lighter at supper time. I don’t anticipate that there will be any quick departure from winter but we know that spring will come sooner than later. Hopefully sooner. Still, I don’t know about you, but I think the looming specter of global warming is actually a frightening potentiality. Not necessarily for me but perhaps for my children or their children. It’s a topic we’ll talk about later this winter. In the meanwhile, let us know; do you believe in global warming or not and why? I’m really interested in hearing people’s opinions on this subject! What do you think about the subject of global warming?



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2010 Blood Pressure Clinic schedule

OK, given snow, or other acts of nature, this is the official 2010 Blood Pressure Clinic as sponsored by our friends at Premier Health Care. Oh, incidentally, it coincides with the Friendship Club meeting schedule too, so here is the schedule for those group meetings as well...all dates are Tuesdays and the clinic will begin at noon unless otherwise noted in the future; January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9 and December 14. We all know how important those numbers are so keep this section on your ‘fridge!

The Williamstown Council on Aging rocks from World Headquarters in the Harper Center at 118 Church Street in town. We’re open for business from 8-4, Monday thru Friday and Sunday at 11 for lunch. You can call us at 458-8250, fax to 458-5156 or email to bogrady@williamstown.net.

We’ve been providing quality programs and services to Williamstown seniors since 1966!

Free in home respite care services

We've a new and really valuable option for elder care right here in the Berkshires and trust me when I tell you to pay attention to this because you probably know someone who could use this service. OK, I gave it away when I titled this particular note; **FREE** in home respite care for caregivers who are caring for individuals at least 60 years old or older. Yeah, they're looking at people with memory deficits but also individuals with limited needs. This does not necessarily disqualify anyone from this program and I would really encourage interested folks to contact Premier at 442-2888 to arrange a consultation. What services will they provide? They'll do personal care such as assist with bathing and dressing-all sorts of hands on care, medication reminders, assistance with walking, housekeeping, companionship, all sorts of necessary stuff-ask them! Maybe they can help you! Oh yeah, this program is funded from a grant by-guess who? Elder Services and Massachusetts Elder Affairs. There may be a limit on available funds so please inquire soon, ok?



Caregiver Support

The caregiver support group we've been organizing with Elder Services will meet on Thursday January 21st at 1:00 here in the Harper Center. Care giving is really a rewarding endeavor which is truly worth the effort. Sometimes it doesn't seem so, especially if the recipient is less than gracious about it, it can feel truly burdensome and actually exhausting in a very physical way. Emotional trauma can be a side effect as well. What many people don't realize is that providing care is frequently chosen as a path- they'll say that someone HAD to provide care, and while this is indeed a logical expectation, one can actually decline to be involved. It happens more frequently than is observed. Caregivers never say no, assume the burden and really need an escape valve. I know this personally. Know someone who's a caregiver? Tell them about our group.

Caregivers have told me that sometimes they feel alone and overwhelmed as well. You're not, we're here!

Income Taxes 2010

It's an annual tradition. The government comes looking to share in our booty to power all those services we've become accustomed to having. I guess it's no taxes-no programs...Anyway, on Tuesday evenings from 6-9 and Saturday mornings 9-noon, AARP volunteers will again be present at the Harper center to assist anyone of moderate means who needs assistance filing their 2009 State and Federal income taxes. These volunteers, led by AARP Regional Coordinator Pim Goodbody, are trained to pay special attention to senior taxes, deductions, etc. Appointments are required so sign up now, the program starts February 2 running thru April 13.



A different type of nutrition conversation...

We start talking on Thursday January 28th and finish on March 4th. Nah, we won't be talking for 6 weeks straight but this will be a different if not downright delicious program. We'll be meeting at 10:30 on those Thursdays in a small group to talk about food, good food, proper nutrition, weight control, exercise, reading labels, selecting the most nutritious foods, preparing food safely, tracking what we eat—all sorts of food talk. The program is called "Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults". Did I say that we'll actually be preparing the food we talk about? Yeah, that too, Harvard University has given a grant to our friends at the Food Bank of Western Mass and the REACH program from NARH to visit senior centers to do some delicious food oriented education. It's really a series of short seminars about nutrition with yummy treats included. As with all seminar type programs, participation will be limited to between 15 to 20 individuals so please act soon if you want to be a part of this! Ask Brian about signing up or with questions!

Eyes

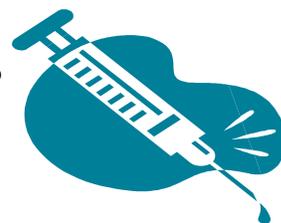
How many people whom you know do not wear glasses or have not had an eye issue of some kind or another in their lives? On Tuesday January 26 at 1:00 Dr. Provenzano from the Advanced

My mother always told me that my eyes were my most precious possession. What did yours say?

Eye Care office will be speaking at the Harper Center about eyes and common afflictions which occur as we age. I don't think there is anyone out there who would take their eyesight for granted and indeed during our need assessment process last year there were several requests from participants to have someone come and talk about eye, vision and that which can affect it. Wish granted! I am sure that many of those reading these words are already familiar with Dr. Provenzano from personal experience. He's been here before, he's a good speaker with a wealth of knowledge and he'll be good to listen to. Bring your questions for him to answer as well as your appetite, we'll be eating soups, salads and chicken with dirty rice first!

H1N1 Flu Shot clinic on January 12

Lots of people have asked about the H1N1 flu vaccine and now we're finally able to offer those shots at the Harper Center this month. The clinic will be on Tuesday January 12 from 5:00 P.M. thru 8:00 P.M. The shot to ANYONE who wants it. They will continue to focus on those groups who have been identified as at risk populations by federal guidelines but will not exclude anyone from the mix. It's sponsored by the Northern Berkshire Pandemic Planning Group and appointments are not required. A small warning; if you come, be prepared to spend a few minutes filling out the usual paperwork!



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

Phone: 413-458-8250

Fax : 413-458-5156

E-mail:

bogrady@williamstown.net

Wasn't it great to see Hazel Burdick "get" the Boston Post Cane last month? I'm thrilled for her as I know that she's had an interest in the cane for awhile. Actually, she set me off looking for the cane back in 1999, just after I'd arrived here. I was cleaning lots of collectables out of the front closet and among the stuff were a large number of canes. She asked about the Post cane, I'd never heard of it but that's what piqued my curiosity and got the search for it started. True story, and yes, it truly is fitting that after her role in starting us on the search for the lost cane, she finally holds it as her own. Congratulations again Hazel!

Now, an interesting side note to this is that the Associated Press picked up on the story and Hazel and the Williamstown Cane became a small national news item. Peter Fohlin sent me the link to the article in the Boston press and looking further, not only did I find Hazel articles in New England papers but in newspapers from Washington State, Washington DC and Colorado. How about that? Hazel Burdick, national news item!

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OK, our Foot Care Clinic has a different day this month-it'll be on Tuesday January 12, the second Tuesday, instead of the third. Kip Moeller, our foot care RN will clip those toes nails and massage those aching feet for those who sign up in advance-and we all know that she fills available slots quickly! She's still accepting appointments for February so call us at 458-8250 to schedule.

Following 2 months of holiday schedule disruptions, the January Brown Bag food delivery will return to it's normal fourth Friday and for January it will be on the 22nd. For those who are vaguely familiar with the program, Brown Bag is a monthly delivery of shelf staple food items as well as fruits and veggies in season delivered to you in a brown paper sack. There are registration requirements so for information call us at 458-8250 and we'll get you an application!

Finally, our SHINE Counselor Peggy Jenks will be here on Wednesday January 20 at 11:30 to help individuals with health insurance questions. She's also available thru the office for individual consultations so call and we'll connect you with her!

The Book Discussion Group will be covering Jonathan Lethern's "Motherless Brooklyn" on January 8 and "Piano Teacher" by Janice Lee on February 5th. The Group meets in the Milne Library at 10:00 and new members are welcome. Contact us at 458-8250 or the library at 458-5369 for information. A full schedule of the selections for the year will follow in the February issue of the Bulletin.

