

Harper Center Bulletin

Williamstown Council on Aging

DECEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

THE WILLIAMSTOWN COUNCIL ON AGING ROCKS FROM WORLD HEADQUARTERS IN THE HARPER CENTER AT 118 CHURCH STREET IN TOWN. WE'RE IN SESSION MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 8:00 UNTIL 4:00 AND SUNDAY AT 11:00 FOR LUNCH. YOU CAN CALL US AT 458-8250, FAX TO 458-5156 OR EMAIL; BOGRADY@WILLIAMSTOWN.NET WE'VE BEEN PROVIDING INFORMATION, REFERRAL, QUALITY PROGRAMMING AND ADVOCACY TO WILLIAMSTOWN ELDERS SINCE 1966!

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So here we are in December and I have only minimally scratched the surface of the problem and bought a couple of presents. You have all heard me whining about Christmas shopping in the past and believe me, this year will not be any different. I wonder what would happen if we all decided that we didn't need Christmas presents and decided to forgo the madness next year? Oh, yeah, the national economy will falter and more people will lose their jobs...never mind.

Anyway, there are a lot of us with reasons to reflect upon this year and be thankful that everything came out OK at the end. Those of us who got through it in good health and with our lives intact should give thanks during this season that we made it. We all know a bunch of other folks who had issues during the year and some who watched their personal lives washed away during the flooding when Irene came to town. We should remember to keep all our friends who've had a tough year in our thoughts as we go about celebrating the season. It will be hard on some this season for sure.

Finally, I want to take a moment to thank all the folks who came in here during 2011 and volunteered to help out in one way or another. Sometimes it was hard to get through it all and we couldn't have done it without you! Have a great holiday season!

GAIL CARIDDI

Our own Berkshire representative to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Gail Cariddi of North Adams, will be here at the Harper Center on Friday December 9th at noon to meet and greet all her constituents from Williamstown. We all know her, she's been here before and really folks, the purpose for her visit is a real old fashioned listening session-she'd really like to hear what you have on your minds, your hopes and dreams for the future and what your government can do for you. So-if you have something to say-bring it here. Of course there will be lunch first, scallops will feature prominently in the menu for the first 40 who reserve a lunch that is.



MGRHS CHORUS IN THE HOUSE

Every year we have a treat courtesy of the students in the Mt. Greylock Regional High School chorus when they come down from the hill and into town to entertain us with their wonderful voices and song. Believe it or not, they've been coming here to Harper to since 1999 to entertain us and bring good cheer. They missed one year, a blizzard somewhere back around 2004, but have been faithful in coming annually since then.

Missing from their lead this year will be Marlene Walt, longtime chorus director who retired at the beginning of the year. The chorus this year is lead by Sherry Howard, we haven't met her yet but we're looking forward to working with her in the years to come.

Anyway, as usual, we'll feast upon pizza first, sausage pepperoni or cheese. There is a sign up-you know where. Sound good?



I would stringly suggest that you get here by 11:30. The pizza will be here at noon but the chorus will be here first...

THE NUTCRACKER TEA



No, it's not August but we're going to have a Tea Party anyway. And yes, it's our friend Karyn O'Toole's idea for a fun afternoon and you all know what that means! This party will be a bit different-oh, it will be built around the tea and special holiday goodies-probably not the summer cucumber sandwiches but winter holiday treats-no, I can't tell you about the food but the signup sheet will talk about the menu. We'll also do a big screen viewing of the Nutcracker Ballet as interpreted by the Cecchetti Ballet Theatre-the company Karyn now works for...Should be a fun afternoon. So get ready for a post Christmas gift- we'll have tea on Tuesday afternoon, December 27 at 1:30. See you then!



THE HORN CLUB OF WILLIAMSTOWN

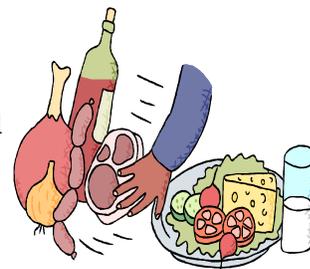
You're all in for a real treat on the afternoon of Thursday, December 22nd!

At 2:00, instructor Susan Matsui and four students from the Williamstown Elementary School will be here at Harper to perform a set of holiday tunes guaranteed to send everyone off in great spirits! This group meets once weekly with Susan to practice and have offered to come across the street to share their music with us. Who could refuse!

They'll be offering a 45 minute set of great tunes and will end it all with a brief sing along. We'll be providing a bit of a snack before hand, cider, cheeses, crackers, maybe veggies and dips. Stop by and share a bit of holiday cheer with some pretty good kids. I'm sure that you'll be glad that you did!

NUTRITION ASSESSMENTS...

Waaaay back in the spring, before Marion came to play with us, Kathy Poirot was here at Harper as the interim COA Outreach Worker. One day she was checking a town ad in the classified section of the Transcript and found an ad from Elder Services soliciting applications for grants to perform various services in the Berkshire Community. Given that we had spent a lot of time during the past year talking about food and good nutrition, I wrote a grant asking for money as a consortia with the North Adams and Adams COA's to offer nutrition counseling services in our communities. And guess what? We got it! So beginning in December, we'll be able to ask our friend Kristin Irace, the registered dietician at NARH, to visit folks in their homes and talk to them about their diets and how they can eat better. She'll even be able to go out there and meet people at the grocery store and help with food selections. Good idea eh? There are a cluster of people out there who do not eat well for a variety of reasons and good nutritional habits are a foundation for good health, right? Anyway, give us a call, we'll visit and see what you need and Kristin will come and see you and give some real professional advice! More to follow, stay tuned!



COMPUTER NOTES

Some folks have recently observed that the computers are a tad bit slower than usual. We're sorry, it can't be helped. Here's a layman's explanation; A recent unfortunate spate of computer bugs infiltrated the system and at one point, had us down to two functioning machines. Due to their nature as open access and free machines, people sometimes "click" on programs they should not, and as a result we get unwanted computer problems. Not fun. Anyway, as a result, we've had to add an extra security system to prevent this from happening. These machines are a bit older and the system slows them down at start up. Can't help it. But here's what we'll do; COA staff -when not busy with other more important concerns-will turn the machines on and have them ready for operation by 9:00. They'll stay up and running Monday through Friday until about 3:30. Please note that the computer lab will be unavailable during monthly care clinics-foot care and blood pressure for example-for confidentiality reasons. The dates and time of these sessions are available in the monthly newsletter.



THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB SUPPORTS...

The effort by Northern Berkshire Health Care to provide 'pedi bears' to members of the community when they land at NARH for a variety of reasons. The bears are given to children when they go to the hospital and to some adults as well. They're a great source of comfort and the recipients are always thrilled to get them. And they're free gifts too.

The bears themselves are created by a corps of hospital volunteers who put them all together and supply them to their usually young patients. Good idea and rewarding. But they need help, the actual stuffing fiber, thread and other materials are needed. So, in December, the Club will collect materials and pass them along to the pedi bear elves...

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Another in our series of special events takes place on Thursday afternoon, December 8th at 1:00. Our friend Meg Greenawalt from Sweetbrook will be back in Harper to present a fun, interactive program entitled "Art Expressions". Art Expressions does not actually teach art, it encourages and engages participants in watercolor painting which will result in a group project that will delight everyone! And guess what? All you have to do is bring yourselves—all the art supplies will be provided. Snacks? Of course! How can you pass on this opportunity for a little fun and relaxing activity?

While I'm at it, let's talk about a gourmet, bang out, massive Hot Dog Extravaganza to be held here at Harper on December 20, at 12:00. All sorts of toppings for those delicious, special Coney Island Dogs. We haven't had a dog day in awhile so let's do it! And then we'll play a game of make up Bingo because there isn't one on Friday the 16! Why you ask...because it's the annual Friendship Club Holiday Party at the Williams Inn, that's why...so don't forget, OK?

PAGE FOUR NEWS AND NOTES...

Serena Merrill, our foot care provider will be here at the Harper Center on Tuesday, December 20 to clip those toenails and rub those aching feet. That's the good news. The bad news is that she's totally booked for the month. She is making appointments for her next trip through town on January 17, 2012. Want to see her? Schedule now folks, her spaces fill fast!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be here at the Harper Center on Wednesday, December 21st 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 Interim Health Care will begin at noon on December 13, right before the Friendship Club meeting here at Harper and as usual, in BP Central, also known as the back room...

Finally, the December Brown Bag offering—sponsored by our friends from the Foodbank of Western Massachusetts—will be on MONDAY DECEMBER 19! Mark your calendars— it's another different day. Sorry about that, these holidays really do mess with our scheduling! 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 tell you about it!

