



Harper Center Bulletin

September 2013 Newsletter

Wow, suddenly September eh? Shorter days and cooler air to sleep in. We hope. Seems as though it was pretty muggy last September. Fall is coming on but fortunately we have lots of growing time left on those tomato plants at home...

And it's great weather to get out and go for a walk. Walking is a really healthy activity which can help in all sorts of ways from weight loss to potentially lowering blood pressure. Speaking of this, we have our own little walking group meeting here at Harper every Thursday morning at 9:00am for a quick spin around the neighborhood. They're always willing to welcome new members so join them! Pleasant company, good conversation and a great way to start the day.



Anyway, back here in Harperville, we have a new face in the office. Heather DeMarsico came to work with us at the end of August and immediately discovered that she knew some of us right away. Yup, it's a small world. She'll be the voice on the telephone when you call in the morning and the person behind the desk in the outer office when you come in. Stop by and say hi if you haven't already done so!

One more thought. September means a return to school and as a result there will be lots of little folk around at certain times of day. Be careful when you're driving in here!

Books, books, books.

Our book discussion group continues to meet at the Milne Public Library monthly on the first Friday at 10:00. Here are the books to be read, dissected and discussed during the next four sessions; September is "Cats Cradle" by Kurt Vonnegut followed in October by "Cutting for Stone" by Abraham Varghese. November's selection is "Speak Memory" by one of my favorite writers, Vladimir Nabokov, Penelope Lively rings out 2013 with "How It All Began" New members are always welcomed and group facilitator Peter Mehlin is always willing to answer questions. You can call him at 458-1388 or email at pmehlin@aol.com . Happy reading!

Williamstown Council on Aging

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The Williamstown Council
on Aging

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Inside this issue:

Healthy Eats	2
Don Bettis	2
Alzheimer's	2
Mind, body, soul	3
Linus	3
Java Judy	3
Page Four News	4

Healthy eats

Maria Connors from Elder Services returns to Harper in September to present a series of participatory conversations on the topic of good eating. We know her; she's been here several times and actually was the presenter for the "My Health, My Life" series last winter. This particular series is entitled "Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults".

Ok, so we now know that we all like to eat...no doubt about it. The reality of all this is that we don't always make good food choices, Sometimes we make conscious decisions to eat junk because we want a special fatty treat. I think that we also tend to eat poorly on occasions simply because we don't take the time to think about what we're doing when we select food. Salad? Great! Cheesy nacho? Greater!! You know what I mean. And we all know that healthy food choices can have a dramatic impact on our own health. Sometimes we need a refresher on all the things we actually know to push us in the right direction, especially where food and eating habits are concerned. That's what this course is all about.

We'll be hosting an introductory session to explain the course-*Healthy Eating* preceded by Pizza, of course, Tuesday September 3rd at 12:00. The actual class is free and runs on consecutive Tuesdays from September 10th through October 15th from 9:00 to 11:30. An hour and a half for six weeks which might change your life.



Don Bettis

We haven't met Don yet. He's a musician, actually a guitar player, who appeared here at Harper awhile ago and left Marion with a CD of his performances. She told me that she had played it at a family gathering and suddenly there was dancing breaking out in her brothers living room. Needless to say we just had to get him in to play for us. His repertoire includes quite a few old standards and newer materials as well. I've heard bits and pieces of his CD- he sounds like he'll be fun to have here.

Don will be in our house to play for us on Thursday afternoon, September 5th at 12:45. He'll be playing "Music for all Occasions" and we'll be providing snacks. Join us!



Kira

Alzheimer's. The name brings chills to your spine. It's an obscenity which robs people of their selves and ultimately kills. It is a soul crushing process which leaves caregivers exhausted in many ways. And it's a disease which simply must be eradicated. To eradicate Alzheimer's Disease will take oodles of money and commitment. The first step toward this process is awareness. We know that you're aware of the existence of this scourge. But we're going to make you more aware and perhaps hear from some folks who have seen the ravages of this disease first hand.

Our buddy Kira Breard from Interim Health Care will be in the house on Thursday afternoon September 19 at 1:00 to talk about AD awareness and perhaps what's new in the war against it. We'll mark the occasion with the final Ice cream Social of the summer.

Yup, it went by fast!

Activities for Mind, Body and Soul

Well what do we think that activities for the mind, body and soul can be?

OK, that was a little brain exercise to get you thinking a bit, you know, brain exercise? All right, never mind, you get it. Mind, body, soul, and not necessarily in the religious sense. It's a triangle, what's good for the mind is good for the soul you know, and what's good for the body is good for the other aspects...Of course you know factors which play into this, it's kind of simple. Diet and nutrition, beyond calories and fat, there are toxins we ingest without thinking, chemical additives to food which can be very harmful. There are processed foods which are stripped of nutrients, added sugar, all sorts of "stuff". Then there is exercise, and this can be easily addressed by simply walking or stretching-there are options out there and we offer a few right here at Harper. Finally... stress and anxiety, the daily drive to always be doing something. That get-it-done we inflict on ourselves has a price. Can we relax more? Slow down? Maybe meditate? We know that these things all affect each other and can clash wreaking havoc on our systems and the people next to us.

Anyway, on Tuesday September 17 at 12:30 Bobbie Corsi from Home Instead Senior Care will be here to lead a discussion on the subject. Lunch first at 12:00, chicken and sides.

Project Linus

Ok, we're all familiar with Project Linus and the wonderful success that it was last year! If you're not familiar with Linus, it's a gathering of knitters, quilters and all around sewers whose combined talents created 33 quilts, blankies and other warm coverings for sick children. It was a truly gratifying program.

So here we go again. Linus Coordinator Maggie Guiden is looking for a few folks who will be able to sew squares together-either here or at home...very simple eh? The squares and measurements will be provided so it's simply putting things together. The batting and final assembly will be done after the squares are connected.

The September dates for Linus at Harper are Thursday afternoons the 12th and 24th. As usual you'll be meeting at 1:00 and of course there will be refreshments! The goal this year is to double last years output!



Java with Judy

Java Judy returns to Harper at 8:30 on the morning of the 25th, as usual a Wednesday. The theme for this session will be apples. I believe that we will be sharing apple recipes so bring your favorite apple recipe-pies, strudel, fritters, in short; anything Apple!

As a refresher, Java Judy is actually Judy Bombardier, Admissions Director at Williamstown Commons. Each month we do an informative and fun presentation, sometimes with a guest speaker and sometimes making crafts but always with food! So essentially, we eat and talk. How good is that? We'll be meeting monthly through the year and cover various topics ranging from holiday crafts to falls avoidance to beating the winter blahs. Join us, and bring a friend. I've discovered a recipe for apple pancakes, if I can master them, we'll have them for breakfast. If not, something else. I'll be looking for a couple taste testers beforehand...



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It's open enrollment season for Medicare Part D and Advantage programs once again! This year the key dates are October 15th and December 7th; these are the start and finish dates for this important period. Any day between these dates is available to enroll, change plans or do other important business related to these plans at this time. Our SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be available to advise on this subject so feel free to ask. We will be hosting regional SHINE director Bonny Di-Tomasso for a formal explanatory program in October--details will follow soon!

By now many of you have seen our new computers with the much BIGGER screens in the back room lab here at Harper. New has brought with it easier access, way faster speed and a plethora of new programs to use. Sometimes new programs can be scary but fear not, our computer guru Elaine Keys has figured all the nuances of our operational systems out and will be happy to help. She will be available for individual consultation and lessons as well beginning September 9th. Let us know and we'll be happy to make arrangements!

Finally, a reminder; there is NO SEAT SAVING here at the Harper Center! First come first serve is the rule, so if someone is in your absolute favorite seat, sorry! We've had three seat incidents lately and actually we thought we were past that point.

Page Four News and Notes

Serena Merrill, our wonderful foot care nurse, will be in the house on Tuesday September 17 to clip nails, massage aching feet and work on those calluses we built up walking all over this summer. That's the good news. The bad is that she is totally booked for September so if you're not on the appointment list, you're out of luck. Her next scheduled appearance in Williamstown is October 15th and we are accepting appointments for that date. Remember folks, it's first come, first serve so time is of the essence!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be here on Wednesday morning September 18th at 10:30 to answer any of those tricky insurance questions you may have. Medicare, Masshealth, one insurance versus the other, the whole alphabet soup of the insurance business...yeah, that stuff. She can help. Appointments are not required but suggested and Peg is available at other times as well--call the office at Harper, 458.8250, and we'll make arrangements.

The monthly blood pressure clinic sponsored by our friends at Sweetbrook will be on Tuesday September 9th at noon, right before the Friendship Club meeting. Our friend Sue will likely be bringing those cookies as a reward for braving the bp test...shall we call this "Magic Cookie Day"?

September's brown Bag will arrive here at the Harper Center on Friday afternoon, September 27 around 2:00-ish. Brown Bag is a monthly offering of shelf stable goods and fruits and veggies in season delivered to you quite literally in a brown paper sack. There is a minimal application process but we can help you navigate that bit. Interested? Contact us at 458.8250 and we'll talk!
