
Harper Center Bulletin

Williamstown Council on Aging

October 2012 Newsletter

Well, we have arrived in October, another of my favorite months. Halloween is clearly one of our favorite holidays and it's not just for children. I can buy enough chocolate in October to last me clear into the December holiday season. And that my friends, is the truth. But there's more to it than that. The leaves will change and we'll have brilliant colors all over, lots of beautiful foliage to look at. The air will be crisp and have that wonderful clean quality which only comes with the arrival of fall. Have you ever noticed how really bright the sun appears at this time of year, or how blue the sky appears? Magic, and not just the type associated with this month! Yes, I love October. The weather,



the World Series, and sorry Sox fans, not this year...

Speaking of weather, last month the wind blew our new grill over forcing us to cook the chicken for the end of summer picnic indoors instead of out. Guess what? The doctor says the unit isn't damaged so we'll use it soon! And again, apologies to all who expected BBQ chicken. We can't control the wind!

The Friendship Club supports...

We're teaming up with the Village Ambulance to collect winter coats again this year. Just because it was balmy last winter doesn't mean that it will be this year and there really are people out there who aren't adequately equipped for winter. So on November 2nd, we'll be collecting here at Harper and we're looking for any clean and usable coats you

might wish to pass on to a good cause. There's no need to wait until November folks, just drop them off and we'll take it from there. Additionally, Village will be collecting non-perishable food items during the drive as well. Don't have a coat to donate-how about a can of soup? And as always, thank you for your support!

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Ernest Hemingway

Richard Clark, remember him? He's been here a few times now and we have always enjoyed his work. He has brought us Mark Twain, Clarence Darrow, William Shakespeare and Gurney's "Love Letters". On Tuesday October 2nd he'll be back and this time will be performing "Life, Language and the Pursuit of Happiness-Ernest Hemingway Alive"! This should be good-we all know the Hemingway portfo-

lio-"Farewell to Arms", "The Sun Also Rises" and "Old Man and the Sea" among many-a true literary genius and one of my personal favorite writers...Richard Clark himself has spent over 30 years in New England regional theatre and New York theatre, is a graduate of Clark University, he studied at the American Academy of dramatic Art, the Actors Connection and the Actor's Loft in New York. His acting credits are many and we are

thrilled to have him in Williamstown again.

So come and join us for a fabulous afternoon with Richard and Papa! Richard's performance is at 1:00. and pizza at 12:30!

This program is partially sponsored by a grant from the Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency!

John Root

At 1:00 on Tuesday October 30, John Root, an Amherst based musician will be here at the Harper Center to entertain us. We've never been visited by John before so this will be a new experience for us-and a delightful one I'm sure. My colleagues out in COA land have been really enthusiastic about him and I'll take them at their word. John sings, plays the piano, flute, clarinet and sax-his

repertoire includes songs we all know and he encourages sing-a-longs. It will be a great way to celebrate Halloween so if you think of it, wear your costume! And yes, we'll be doing lunch first and we'll post the actual menu in a couple weeks along with the sign up sheet. John also comes our way thru a partial sponsorship from the Cultural Council of



Northern Berkshire in the form of a grant. I have already mentioned that they are a local agency receiving support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which is a state agency. Trust me when I tell you that we really appreciate their support!

Breakfast with Margie

On Friday morning October 19, Margie Ware, director of the SHINE program at Elder Services will be in the house to talk about the open enrollment for Medicare prescription drug programs. The open enrollment period this year runs from October 15th through December 7th and for most people, this will be the

ONLY time this year when you'll be able to change your plan. Those who are Mass Health or Extra Help recipients are really encouraged to come as there will be a limited number of \$0 premium plans available next year. So-French Toast and breakfast sausage at 8:30 and a conversation with Margie at

9:00. And we promise to have real maple syrup available too...



Death with dignity

A question on this November's ballot would allow certain terminally ill people to self-administer a prescribed drug and end their own lives. The so-called "Death with Dignity" initiative is Question 2 on this year's ballot. Should this bill pass and become law, adult Massachusetts residents diagnosed with a terminal illness and with a life expectancy of 6 months or less would be eligible to request the life-ending medications. The process would involve a terminal diagnosis from one's personal physician and corroboration of the diagnosis by an independent doctor. Several requests would have to be processed before the "final" prescription is issued.

Similar "Death with Dignity" laws exist in Oregon and Washington states.

Of course, the presence of this bill on the ballot has raised all sorts of issues, both pro and con. A public debate has raged for several months around the subject.

At 1:00 on Thursday afternoon, October 11, Kathy McKnight will be at the Harper Center to present the issues surrounding this topic. She recently gave a similar talk at St. John's Church so she's well-versed on the subject. Join us!

The Mills of Williamstown

As you pass through the towns of North Berkshire, you can't help but notice all the former mill buildings dotting the landscape. They're everywhere. In the days of industrial power, these mills used the water from our rivers and streams to drive the local economy. Lots of us worked in or were the children of those employed in the Berkshire industrial powerhouse. And we remember what happened when those days ended...

Many of these buildings have found new life in the form of housing developments, artists' lofts and the most spectacular re-use of all—MOCA in the former Sprague complex in North Adams. Others sit vacant awaiting re-use. But the memories remain..

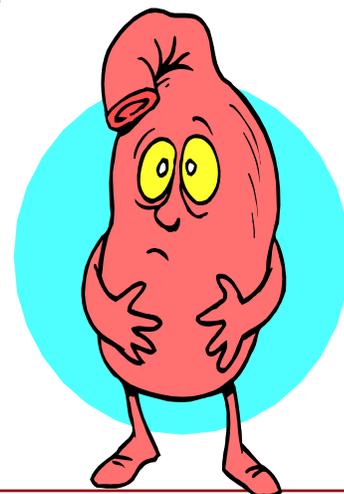
On Tuesday October 16, Sarah Currie, curator at the Williamstown History Museum will be here at Harper at 12:30 to present an interactive history of the Williamstown mill era, with photos and news clippings from days gone by. We're hoping that former Williamstown mill workers will join in the conversation and share their recollections of this lost era. We know you're out there—join us! Oh—and lunch? How about Fifth Hot Dog Extravaganza of 2012 at noon? Cool! We'll see you here at noon!



If your tummy is rumbling...

So now that you've become intrigued by the headline and started reading, right? Got ya!

On Thursday afternoon, October 25th, our friend Kira from Interim Health Care will be here at Harper to talk with us about Digestive Diseases...you know, normal digestion versus not normal, heart burn, ulcers, constipation, normal versus abnormal bowel movements—and of course, the BIG D...all that stuff. It's all a part of our monthly "Here's To Your Health" series with Kira and you know, this topic really could be fun. Hey, everyone digests and from time to time, it doesn't quite work right. You know what I mean! Anyway, come and join us on the 25th at 1:00 for what could be an informative and interesting conversation. Snacks provided of course!



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The ghosts, wolf men, super star ball players, super heroes and fairy princesses from across the street will stream through Harper on the morning of October 24th at 9:00-yup it's time for the annual "Words Are Wonderful" parade of children from the Williamstown Elementary School! For those who don't know, the school's annual "words" program includes a day when the kids dress as their favorite story book characters and lead by the WES band, march around the neighborhood and thru Harper, in the front door and out the back. Many of us are on hand to cheer them on as they pass by, in costumes of our own. It's a fun precursor to Halloween...and this year, we'll have coffee and muffins and donuts at 8:30. Sound good?



Page four news and notes

Our foot caretaker, Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday October 16th-her usual Tuesday slot- to work her magic with peoples feet. There is a slot open in October for anyone interested. Act quickly or we're talking about November!

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 October 17 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, will take place on Tuesday October 9th at noon immediately preceding the Friendship Club meeting. We had a new nurse last month but she brought those sweet cookies as a reward for a BP check too!

The monthly Brown Bag, spon-

sored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday October 26th. 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 application process. If you cannot be here on delivery day, make arrangements for someone else to hold them! We have limited space in our refrigerators and just can't accommodate a lot of extra food!
