

HARPER CENTER BULLETIN

January 1st 2019

WILLIAMSTOWN COUNCIL ON
AGING

Harper Center Bulletin #293

January 2019 Newsletter

Happy New Year everybody! How time flies! We're into the last year of "teens" portion of the 21st Century and heading for the 20's...Can you imagine? This means that we're also almost through with 20 percent of the 21st Century as well! Holy cow! Wonder if they'll be "Roaring Twenties"...

Twenty Eighteen was an interesting year. We added some programming including the evening/weekend transport options, stretched a lot of muscles and had lunch along the way. Us eat? Really? There will be more in 2019 starting with the new medical transport program right out of the gate on January 2nd. You can read all about it inside these pages. The WTF returns for a Saturday afternoon workshop and we're headed for a couple cookouts soon, who cares about the snow? Busy month on tap.

Oh, that. It will snow. I'd rather snow than freezing rain wouldn't you? It's winter!! Remember, if it snows heavily it will be safety first and we may not be open for activities. The van might not run either. Safety first! While we're on the subject, for those of you in classes, Yoga, Tai Chi, Exercise, etc, if it snows and school is closed, no class. If it's a delay and you're not sure because it's bad out, you have two options. Call us for information or better yet, stay home! Be safe! There's always tomorrow!

Here's wishing everybody a safe, happy and healthy New Year! Enjoy life, your friends and family. Forget about the past, it's over. Time for a great New Year!!!

AARP Tax Aide Program

Here we go; We'll begin scheduling sessions with an AARP Tax Aide on Monday January 7th and will continue to schedule until the appointments available are filled.

AARP Tax Aide program is staffed entirely by volunteers, screened and trained to assist tax payers of moderate means to complete and file their 2018 state and federal income taxes. Participants are requested to bring a copy of their 2017 tax returns and any pertinent documentation for the 2018 filing.

Sessions with a certified Tax Aid are available on Tuesday evenings at 6:00, 7:00 and 8:00 . Call us at 458.8250 to arrange a session.





Louison House

Ah, it's a very small world with many connections isn't it? I knew Terry Louison for whom the shelter is named. A great North Berkshire community advocate and many folks in the human service world grew up under her tutelage. She would be proud of how the program bearing her name has grown!

There has been a lot of activity with this program in the last couple years including a fire which closed the original facility in Adams, the acquisition of a new site at Flood House in North Adams, the arrival of funds to renovate the Adams site, lots of people and families served...a great story!

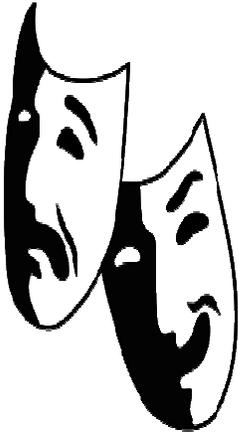
We'll hear it in person from the Director, Kathy Keeser, on January 25th at 1:00. Kathy assumed the Directorate of the agency several years ago and has seen quite a bit of history in a short period of time. We'll be preceding the conversation with her with pasta, garlic bread, a protein and salad, year at noon. This will be an interesting afternoon!

Community Works

Our friends from the Williamstown Theatre Festival will be back at Harper on Saturday January 19th (yes, it's a Saturday) from 11:00 to 12:30. It's a new workshop folks and there's no need to RSVP, just show up!

WTF artists will lead the group into an exploration of two fundamentals of theater and storytelling. Through simple and fun group exercises you can step inside the creative process. Absolutely no prior experience necessary!

Associate Director Laura Savia will be joined this time by extraordinary award winning writer Boo Killebrew. The workshop is part of WTF's Community Works program committed to creating theatre for and of the Berkshires. Join us! The program is open to anyone aged 18 and older!



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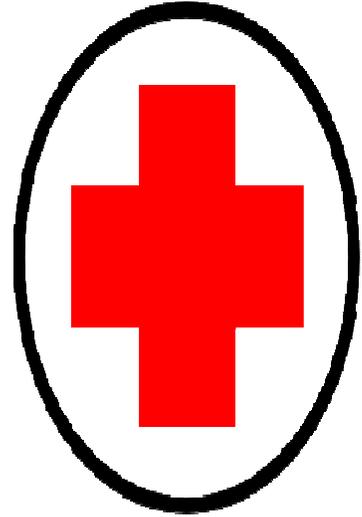
On Tuesday January 8th Our van operators will be attending a training right here at the Harper Center. It's required, mandatory, all those "You will" things but at least everyone will come here for it. Essentially it means that we have to cancel oil painting for the day, sorry about that folks. As a result, there will also be just one cookie and coffee Tuesday during January. We'll make it up down the road.

We're also planning a couple Elder Services meals during January as well. The last one, the holiday roast beef, was a great success! And thanks to everyone who donated \$2.00 for the cause. The funding for that nutrition program has apparently been flat for many years, the cost goes up but the federal budget remains stagnant. Unfair!

Let's try this again...

Last month we had hoped that Angela from NB Transport would come and talk with us about some really important information. Unfortunately, before this could happen, the paratransit unit drivers at the BRTA struck and NB Transport was asked to pick up as many of their medical trips as possible. Angela found herself quite busy with unexpected riders. Let's try again.

Every so often we need to have a reminder about some basic life saving techniques we can all do without any serious investment in training. I'm referring to the universal choke saver techniques everyone should know, and the use of an automated defibrillator device seen everywhere these days...and right here at Harper in the rear entry foyer. On Friday the 18th, our friend Angela will show us choke saver techniques and explain the AED. Lunch first? Of course. We're thinking grilling, burgers with lots of fixings and potatoes at noon. So food at noon, Angela at 1:00. Veggie burgers are available too. See you then!



Off to Vermont!

We talked about this last month, so now we'll just cut to the chase!

We are acutely aware that there is a need for transportation and also aware that there is a need to be able to get to primary care in Vermont. While BMC has utilized County Ambulance to bring people from here to there, there were no options to get to the SMC campus in Bennington or Pownal...until now. Your COA has worked with NB Transport to initiate travel to SCMC destinations commencing January 2nd. We're using grant funds so this may be a limited time program, we're actually calling it a pilot and currently it will end either on June 30th, 2019 or earlier if funds are exhausted before then. Will it continue? We don't know, we'll help look for sponsors but in the meanwhile we'll get you to Bennington or Pownal during the week, Monday-Friday.

To access the ride, call NB Transport at 458.9831. They'll be happy to help.



State Representative John Barrett

State representative John Barrett will be in the house, this house, not THAT house, on Friday February 1st. I guess you could say that this announcement comes in the form of future attractions...

Rep. Barrett was elected to fill the final portion of Gail Cariddi's term when she passed away in June a couple years ago and then was elected on to begin his own full term last November. Of course, if you have lived around here for awhile you know that he was the Mayor of North Adams for a couple decades awhile ago. Some of you undoubtedly remember him when he was growing up here in Williamstown. Yup, he's from here. And he had his picture taken with a famous ballplayer here too... He'll be here to tell us about what's happening in Boston, local initiatives and answer questions. He's here to speak at 1:00, burgers at noon!



Williamstown Council on Aging

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Our friends Bret and Amanda are offering a new session of Matter of Balance in North Adams at The Green in 85 Main Street. Matter of Balance, or Mob for short, is an awards willing program designed to create strategies to avoid falls and increase activity levels. It's a series of eight classes, 2 hours in duration into which are packed with great information and exercises you can do easily to strengthen the core needed for balance. The sessions begin on Tuesday January 8th and will run for eight weeks until February 26th. I'm sure that there will be a snow day contingency too. You can register for the class at 663.7588, extension 28. We've offered the class several times here at Harper and recommend it very highly!

There's a new program for people living with dementia starting up in Pittsfield. Home Instead Senior Care, a really good organization some of us know well, have started a "Friends Club" at their offices on Wendell Ave in Pittsfield. The program is designed to provide support to elders and their families who have embarked on a journey through Dementia, everyone who has walked this road knows that support is quite valuable. They have half day and full day options, provide snacks and breakfast if attending early. The program is actually designed for folks with early stage dementia, activities are created accordingly. You can contact the program for info via telephone at 442.0907 or electronically to FriendsClub@HomeInstead.com.

Page Four news and notes

Serena Merrill will pause here at Harper during her monthly tour of the county on Tuesday January 15. In case you don't know, Serena is our foot care nurse... The great news is that she is here to help out and appointments with her can be had by calling the office here at Harper and asking about it. The bad thing is that there are only so many options in each day and her slots fill fast. There are three opening for Serena in January as this is written (in late December) but...February is booked solid. If you need to see her, now is the time.

The monthly Blood Pressure Clinic with our friends from Williamstown Commons will happen at the Bingo break on Tuesday January 29th. I hear that there will be magic cookies...

SHINE Counselor Hedy Lipez Burbank is available to help with all sorts of health insurance questions. Should you need to speak with the SHINE counselor about health insurance issues, feel free to call us here at 458.8250 and we'll make arrangements for you.

The Brown Bag food delivery for the month of January will be here at the Harper Center on Friday January 25th at 1:30 ish. It's a monthly offering of fruits and veggies in season and shelf stable food goods all the time. Interested? Call us for details; 458.8250

