

Harper Center Bulletin

HARPER CENTER
BULLETIN #294

FEBRUARY 1ST, 2019

February 2019 Newsletter

February. An interesting month. I anticipate that there will be snow, possibly lots of it just because it's the middle of the winter. Then again we might have to break out the lifeboats if it rains. Or snow and boats. Given the state of undeniable global warming we just don't know now do we? Personally I'm hoping for snow. That after all, is how it should be!

I had hoped to get a little skiing in before now but alas, we had only one decent snow fall and then 2 days of rain to melt the snow. Then it all froze over...

Being February and a winter month as well, remember to be careful outside. There are cold winds out there whistling thru the trees and cold frequently equals ice and slippery surfaces-do be careful. We don't want anyone to fall! It's getting lighter out earlier but still watch your step in the early eve. And equally as important, dress for the weather! Wear your hats, winter coats and gloves! We have a collection of weather tips for anyone interested in them -just stop by and ask-we'll print them for you.

And while you're at it, watch out for that whacko with the arrows! Falling for someone because some naked dude with wings shot you with an arrow? Really!?

Happy Valentines Day! Happy Presidents Day! Happy Ground Hog Day!



New Medicare cards-update

Feels like it has been about a year since they began issuing new Medicare cards, you know, the cards with a new number that isn't your Social Security number? Everyone should have a new card by now. If you don't, it could be that the Social Security office doesn't have your current address. Did you move?

Perhaps it was thrown away accidentally because it didn't have the Medicare information on it. No problem! You can order your new card by calling Medicare at 800.633.4227, or set up an account at MyMedicare.gov to receive a copy of it.

Once you receive your new card, you can discard your old one safely. Tear it up and make sure that nobody can access your information.

Questions? You can call us here at the Harper Center, 458.8250 and we'll be glad to help out!

Williamstown COA Board members;

Pamela Burger, Chair

Judy Bombardier, Vice Chair

Jody Green, Secretary

Pat Picard

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Marty Greenstein

Anne Jones

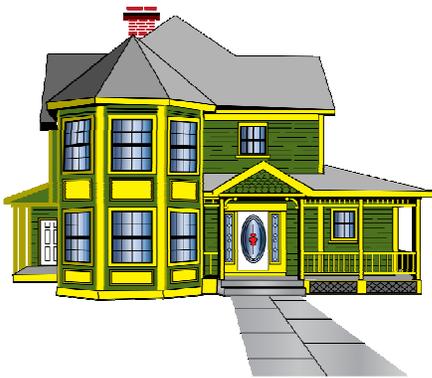
Elaine Keyes

Ali Gagnier

Representative John Barrett

State representative John Barrett will be in our house, the Harper Center, 118 Church Street, on February 1st at 1:00. Not that other House he frequently goes to...

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. Truth is that there is a lot going on out there, a new budget being developed, new laws to be looked at and then there is the whole marijuana thing...of course there's also the matter the Berkshires and our needs and desires...He's here to speak at 1:00, burgers, brats and dogs at noon! We will require that you reserve the food if you intend on eating with a cutoff date to be Thursday January 31st at noon for food. Thanks for observing this latter point.



Louison House

Louison House Director Kathy Keeser was to have visited with us a month ago and talked with us and tell us all about Louison house, successes and adventures in the last couple years. You all remember the big fire right...?

Anyway, we had to postpone that particular session as Louison House had some important mortgage issues to discuss at a meeting and, as Director, Kathy needed to be present. No problem, we're flexible and she'll be here on Friday February 15th instead. We had planned to do a pasta luncheon for her in January so we'll likely do that this time around too. So watch for the menu items and join us at 1:00 for a really interesting

AARP Tax assistance has begun!



Here we go; AARP Tax Aide programming starts again right here in the Harper Center on Tuesday February 5th at 6:00 p.m. AARP Tax Aide is a free voluntary service provided through the generosity of well trained volunteers who will assist tax payers of moderate income to complete and file state and federal income taxes. Sessions with Tax Aide Volunteers are one hour in length and reservations are required. Participants should bring all pertinent paperwork to file their 2018 taxes and a copy of their 2017 tax returns to the session. You can contact us at 458.8250 for information or to schedule an appointment.

Here's the catch. Sessions are first come first serve. February is already full, March is filling and your best option for an early evening slot is April. Act fast folks...

Death with Dignity

Everybody has to go. No doubt about that. We never know when, it just happens although sometimes a disease process will give a clue as to what to expect and when. We all hope to go to bed one night and not awaken. That is what I have heard described as the ideal. We all know that the ideal and the actual reality do not necessarily correspond.

Some of us will go off peacefully. Some of us will not. In my lifetime I have witnessed quite the opposite with some of the most significant people in my life struggling at the end.

There is legislation out there which will enable an individual to choose to assume the responsibility for ending their own lives. This act is surely controversial; it was debated and defeated in a general election several years ago by the slimmest of margins. There have been emotional debates and strong support on both sides of the issue.

On Tuesday February 26th Kathy McKnight, R.N., a local resident and advocate, will be here at Harper to talk with us about this issue. There will be time for discussion. This topic can have an impact on all of us so think about it. There will be food first, at noon, menu TBD, conversation at 1:00

Aging Mastery....

We'll be offering the annual Aging Mastery Program here at Harper once again starting in March.

On Thursday March 14th our Aging Mastery Program (AMP) facilitator Jennifer Munoz is back on the house to launch our sixth AMP series right here in the Harper Center.

What's AMP? It's a program designed to empower older adults to make and maintain small but impactful changes in behaviors in order to live more satisfying lives. Guest speakers will present seminars on valuable subjects including improving sleep quality, exercise, healthy eating and hydration, medication management, planning for your future, healthy relationships and financial management.

The sessions are 1.5 hours long, 1:00—2:30, and run from March 14 to May 16th. Of course there will be healthy snacks! And the program is FREE! If you're 55 years old or older, join us!

Winter tea time!

Yes, it's half way to Miss Karyn's Annual High Tea. We all know that event occurs in August when it's a tad warmer and goofy hats and gloves are appropriate...now it's February, we are way less than formal for this event and heavy sweaters and mukluks are welcome...

Never the less, it's Tea time! This year the theme will be a Bridal Tea as one of our long time "wait staff", Lacy, is soon to be married. She's been with us since she was about ten so this is a milestone!

Of course there will be all the usual goodies and tea selections, you know, cucumber sandwiches, always my favorite, and this year cake to celebrate impending nuptials!

Oh, the date; February 19th at 1:00, join us, no gloves required!



Just a brief note to thank everyone who contributed to the 2018-19 annual coat drive. Your support has enabled neighbors who needed a warm coat to get through the winter cold wrapped in warmth! We had set a goal at 100 coats for the year and we definitely surpassed that number again. Thank you so much! We'll do it again next year,!

WILLIAMSTOWN
COUNCIL ON AGING

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Since we restructured our meals programming with Elder Services we've had some really good meals and very strong support for them. We'll keep doing them, everybody seems to enjoy the meal selections. I also want to thank the folks who have contributed to the voluntary donation box for these meals. While it is indeed true that they're funded by ESBC through a federal Title 3 grant, the program has been level funded for years, "flat" as one of my colleagues describes it, and subsequently every little gift helps keep the program running.

Additional transportation opportunities are available from us to you via Northern Berkshire Transport on Thursday and Friday evenings, Saturday during the day and Sunday mornings. As of January 2nd, we'll be able to transport clients of Southwestern Vermont Medical Center to the SWMC Bennington and Pownal campuses. These programs are both Pilot programs, which means essentially that funding might expire at the end of June. We established both of these options as there was a perceived need out there in the community for this type of transportation. Good options for folks without cars and who need access to rides outside of our normal working hours right?

To arrange a ride, call Angela at 458.9831.

Page four news and notes

Our foot caretaker, Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday February 19 to work on your feet, clipping nails, reducing calluses and massaging the soreness out. Unfortunately she is booked for the month of February but there are a couple, couple actually meaning two, openings available for March. Hint; this may very well fill up so get moving! Call us here at Harper, 458.8250, we'll schedule you. By the way, there are several slots already spoken for in April...just saying.

For those of you who have found yourselves to be challenged by the very technical stuff which comprises our health care insurance paperwork, our SHINE Counselor Hedy Burbank is available to help. Appointments are necessary and can be made by calling us here at Harper, 458.8250. We'll make all the arrangements.

The monthly Brown Bag, sponsored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday February 28th. 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. And please people, 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 food needing to be kept cold!

There will be a monthly BP clinic, likely the 26th, which is the day of the Death with Dignity seminar, but we'll let you know for sure later this week.

