

Sterling Council on Aging

January 2012

Volume 17, Number 105

Our mission is to maintain the health and well being of the Sterling seniors and to assist them with preserving their independence.

Butterick Building

1 Park Street

Mon – Thu: 8 – 2:30 PM

Fri: 8 – 12 noon

COA (Council on Aging)

Office: 978-422-3032

Rides: 978-422-3032

Meals: 978-422-8022

Fax: 978-422-9916

Message from the Director

The Site Development Committee has recommended a new senior center to be built on the corner of Muddy Pond and Boutelle Roads. The Board of Selectmen heard their recommendations and will be forming a Building Committee soon. The hope is that this Building Committee will firm up the size and cost of the project so that we can move forward. This is the furthest that we have gotten in the process, and we are all optimistic about the future. Listen for more information about the project. We are going to need everyone's support in order for the new senior center to come to fruition. We need to keep our focus on the goal, which is to help the seniors of Sterling to the best of our ability. The new senior center is about providing services and helping our neighbors. The National Council on Aging states that "senior centers serve as a gateway to the nation's aging network – connecting older adults to vital community services that can help them stay healthy and independent." Senior Centers are more than bingo. We provide nutrition, socialization, and exercise which help reduce frailty and provide engagement for a large percentage of the population. Having enough space and resources will positively impact you and your neighbors. If you have questions about the Senior Center, please come down and ask questions. Please help us help you.

Senior Center Staff

Director:

Karen L. Phillips

Regular Driver:

George Guertin

Part-time Driver:

Pam Dell

Spare Drivers:

John Perry

Gloria Rugg

Meal Site Manager:

Pam Dell



◆ COA Board
Sharon Bloom, Chair
Barbara Foster, Vice Chair
Mary Higgins, Secretary
Constance Cleary, Treasurer
Anita Benware
Irene Camerano
Debra MacLennan
Ellen Sesia
Peter Watson
Ken Day, Associate
Sue Doucette, Associate
Susan Duquette, Associate

In case of bad weather, call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032 before venturing out to any of our programs. While the Center itself is usually open, some activities might be cancelled due to snow and/or ice. Thank you.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, USDA food distribution will no longer be offered in Sterling. If you are in need of food assistance, you can go to the Wachusett Food Pantry in Holden, the food pantry at WHEAT, or contact the COA office.

The COA Board meets the 1st Thursday of the month at 4 PM in the Senior Center.

Special Events for January

Monday, January 2 – Senior Center closed for New Year's

Tuesday, January 3 – Blood pressures at 12 noon

Tuesday, January 10 – Last day to vote on our tag line. Have your voice heard and help us pick a phrase that best describes the Senior Center!

Tuesday, January 10 – Monthly birthday party at the Senior Center. We will be serving cake and singing "Happy Birthday" during lunch. If you are interested in joining us for lunch, call Pam at the Meal Site, 978-422-8022, by noon on Monday.

Monday, January 16 – Senior Center closed for Martin Luther King Day

Thursday, January 19 – SHINE counselor will be available to answer health insurance questions.

Appointments are required by calling the Senior Center at 978-422-3032

Thursday, January 19 – Elder Keep Well Clinic from 12 – 2 PM. Come and meet with a nurse for blood pressures and medication and disease management.

Monday, January 23 – "How to Beat the Winter Blues" talk by Sterling Village at 12:30 PM. It is very common to be less cheery in the winter months, with the cold weather, and shorter days. This talk will help give all of us some tips on breaking out of that blah feeling. All are welcome.

Thursday, January 26 – Book club at 12:30 PM. This month's selection is *Girl in Translation* by Jean Kwok. All are invited.



"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."

- Edith Sitwell

The COA is looking for donations of Birthday cards. We send out a card to every senior over 75. Donations can be dropped off at the Senior Center office. Thank you everyone who has donated cards already. We really appreciate it!

The book club is still going strong. It generally meets the 4th Thursday of the month at 12:30 PM. Here are the next selections:

January 26 – *Girl in Translation* by Jean Kwok

February 23 – *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks

March 22 – *Little Bee* by Chris Cleave

Ongoing Events:

Mondays –

Coffee and donuts at 9 AM. Catch up on conversations with old friends or make some new ones - \$0.50

Art class at 10 AM. Discover your artistic side with classes taught by Artist Howard Besnia, at his studio.

Senior Fitness at 10 AM. Get in shape with a fun group of people and a certified instructor. This class is offered thanks to Oriol Healthcare – free.

Tuesdays –

Game day at 12:15 PM. Come on down to play bridge, dominoes, cards, scrabble, etc.

Wednesdays –

Chair yoga at 9:30 AM. No need to get up. Learn yoga while staying in your chair. \$3.00 a class.

Walking club – stopped until Spring

Shopping trip to various stores at 1 PM – Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Target, etc. Sign up required. Limited to 9 people.

Thursdays –

Yoga at 9 AM. Gentle yoga stretches for strength and flexibility with a certified instructor - \$3.00 per class.

Meals – we serve a healthy lunch Monday to Friday at 11:30 AM. We do the cooking and the dishes, so come to the Senior Center and enjoy. Please make your reservations 24 hours in advance (before 12 noon). Your \$2.00 donation is appreciated.

A nurse is available to check blood pressures on the first Tuesday of every month at 12 noon.

Elder Keep Well Clinic every third Thursday from 12 – 2 PM. You can have a private meeting with an RN for blood pressures, glucose levels, disease management, and medication counseling.

A SHINE counselor is available for private appointments regarding your health insurance questions once a month. Call to schedule an appointment.

Our computer lab is up and running and has internet access. Computer classes will be held throughout the year.

Don't forget that we have a pool table for impromptu games or practice.

Transportation is not an excuse to miss out on these activities. We provide transportation on our senior van. The charge is \$1.00 roundtrip in town and \$2.00 roundtrip out of town. There is no charge to come to the Senior Center. All you have to do is call us at least 48 hours in advance to make a reservation.

All reservations can be made by calling 978-422-3032.

News from SHINE January 2012

Can I still change my Medicare Plan??

The 2011 Medicare Open Enrollment period ended on December 7th, but there are still a few changes you can make if you qualify.

For those with a Medicare Advantage Plan:

Between January 1 and February 14, you can leave your plan and switch to Original Medicare, but you cannot switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan. Your Original Medicare coverage will begin the first day of the following month. If you drop your Medicare Advantage Plan during this period, you will be able to join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to add drug coverage. Your prescription drug coverage will begin the first day of the month after your enrollment. You may also add a supplement plan at this time.

For those with a Tufts Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (drug coverage only) in 2011:

If you did not select a different Medicare drug plan for 2012, then you are currently without drug coverage. You have until the end of February to enroll in a new Part D drug plan for 2012, which will begin the first of the month after your enrollment.

For those with Prescription Advantage or getting “Extra Help” paying for prescription drugs:

You can change your plan anytime during the year. Those with Prescription Advantage can do this only once each year. Those with “Extra Help” can change every month.

You can now access our monthly SHINE chat line, sponsored by the Central Massachusetts Agency Aging, on the second Tuesday of each month. To attend the SHINE Session, go to www.SeniorConnection.org and click on Connection for Caregiver button. Then click on the Support Groups and Chats button. Create a username and password, log in and click on SHINE.

If you need help on any aspect of your health insurance, SHINE offers free counseling at your local Senior Center or Council on Aging. Call your Senior Center or COA and ask for a SHINE appointment. You can reach a SHINE volunteer by phone at 1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636) If you get the SHINE voice mail, leave your name and phone number and a counselor will call you back as soon as possible. SHINE (Serving the Health Information of Elders) is coordinated by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs in partnership with the Friends of the Milford Senior Center, The Massachusetts Councils on Aging, and other local agencies.

Living Memorial Honor
Sterling COA/Senior Center
1 Park Street * Sterling, MA 01564

I am enclosing \$ _____
In honor of _____
In memory of _____
Donor's name _____
Address _____

This coupon is for your convenience in making a gift that will enhance senior services in our community today and tomorrow. Your support is greatly appreciated. Our sincere thanks to those who are remembering their friends and family by making contributions in their name to the Senior Center.

January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month

Glaucoma is a very misunderstood disease. Glaucoma is a complicated disease in which damage to the optic nerve leads to progressive, irreversible vision loss. Often, people don't realize the severity or who is affected.

Four key facts about glaucoma: 1) glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness; 2) there is no cure (yet) for glaucoma; 3) everyone is at risk for glaucoma; 4) there may be no symptoms to warn you. Some statistics about glaucoma: it is estimated that over 2.2 million Americans have glaucoma but only half of those know they have it; approximately 120,000 are blind from glaucoma, accounting for 9-12% of all cases of blindness in the US; about 2% of the population ages 40-50 and 8% over 70 have high eye pressure; glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the work; glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among African Americans; other high-risk groups include people over 60, family members of those already diagnosed, diabetics, and people who are severely nearsighted.

A 2002 Prevent Blindness America Survey found that: blindness ranked third (after cancer and heart disease) as people's major fear; 50% had heard of glaucoma, but weren't sure what it was; 30% had never heard of glaucoma

The best way to check for glaucoma is to have your eyes examined at least every 2 years.

Reprinted from www.glaucoma.org/glaucoma-facts-and-stats



Tag line contest

The COA received 25 entries for a catch phrase. We would like to thank the following people who submitted a suggestion: Charlotte Gildutis, Nat Pecorelli, Mary Gaffney, Millie Alzapiedi, Charlie Madden, June Crone, Anita Benware, Helene Gray, Shirley Rotti, Bill Lavalley, Marilyn Morgan, and Karen Phillips. The board narrowed the list down to their favorite 4. Now you get to choose the winner. You have until **January 10th** to vote for your favorite. The winner will be announced in the February newsletter and the person who wrote it will get a prize. Here are your final 4:

- Having a Sterling Attitude
- Live, Love, Laugh – Be Happy
- Continue to Grow With Us in Mind, Spirit, and Body
- Living Out Our Sterling Years Together

You can call, email, or mail in your choice. We also have a ballot box in the Senior Center for your convenience. We look forward to your responses!

Top Ten New Year's Resolutions

Most people make a list of resolutions for the New Year. People want to change or improve their lives. January, as the start of the year, is a good time to start. Here are the top 10 resolutions made:

1. Spend more time with family and friends – 50% of Americans make this resolution
2. Fit in fitness
3. Tame the bulge – 66% of Americans are overweight or obese
4. Quit smoking
5. Enjoy life more
6. Quit drinking
7. Get out of debt
8. Learn something new
9. Help others – volunteer
10. Get organized

These are all worthwhile endeavors. While most people start off well, the resolutions tend to fade by March. The Senior Center can help with some of these. You can see old friends or make new ones at the Center. It is a great place to see people and be social. We offer a Senior Exercise Class, Senior Yoga, and Chair Yoga, which can help add fitness and possibly help lose weight. The Senior Center is a smoke-free environment and we don't have a liquor license, so spend time with us! Isolation is not good, so by coming to the Senior Center, you will enjoy life more than by staying by yourself. Many of our programs are free or very low cost, so you won't go into deeper debt by coming here. We have classes, games, and speakers, so there is always something to learn. We have a huge volunteer network and could always find something for you to do. I don't think I can help you get organized, but maybe you could help us, which might spur you on to do the same. The best resolution you can make is to come to the Senior Center!



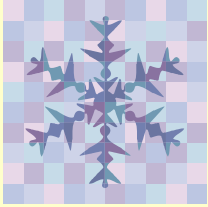
If you are having difficulty getting food, consider going to the Wachusett Food Pantry. The Pantry is a free-of-charge, supplemental, monthly food program offering 3 – 5 days of meals to any family in the region with either a short or long term need. Senior distribution is held the Friday before the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10 – 11:30 AM at Wachusett Extended Care (Holden Hospital), 56 Boyden Road, Holden (note new address). This month's distribution is Friday, January 20th. Proof of residency is required. The Pantry is also always in need of volunteers.



January Calendar of Events

(Menu subject to change)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Senior Center closed for New Year's	3 11:30 – butternut mac and cheese 12 – Blood pressures 12:15 – Game day	4 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – chicken 1 – Van shopping trip to Target	5 9 – Yoga 11:30 – sloppy Joes	6 11:30 – teriyaki diced chicken
9 9 – Coffee 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – baked fish	10 Birthday party 11:30 – SPECIAL: beef tips burgundy 12:15 – Game day	11 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – American chop suey 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	12 9 – Yoga 11:30 – chicken breast	13 11:30 – ham and cheese bake
16 Senior Center closed for Martin Luther King Day	17 11:30 – lasagna with meat sauce 12:15 – Game day	18 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – diced chicken white bean chili 1 – Van shopping trip to K-Mart	19 9 – Yoga 11:30 – Swedish meatballs 12 – 2 – Elder Keep Well Clinic	20 11:30 – chicken
23 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – penne with Bolognese sauce 12:30 – How to Beat the Winter Blues talk	24 11:30 – chicken salad sandwich 12:15 – Game day	25 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – roast pork 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	26 9 – Yoga 11:30 – chicken breast 12:30 – Book club	27 11:30 – potato crunch fish
30 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – roast chicken	31 11:30 – pizza bagels 12:15 – Game day			



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We're on the Web!
www.sterling-ma.gov

The Senior Center is looking to add an outreach worker to our staff. This person will visit with seniors who need assistance, focusing on those over 80. In order to start this program along, we are looking for some volunteers to do the start up work of building the database, contacting seniors, and working on the forms for confidentiality. If you are interested in assisting in this project, you need to contact Karen Phillips, COA Director to fill out a CORI form and talk about your qualifications. On the flip side, if you are a senior that needs some help, or someone to talk to, please call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032, and we will assist in whatever manner we can. This program will help another segment of the seniors in town. We don't want anyone lost through the cracks. It is not always easy to ask for help. In this case, we are offering, so you don't have to ask. Please help us make this new project a success for everyone involved.

New class: we are now offering a Chair Yoga class on Wednesdays at 9:30 AM. Cost is \$3.00 a class. Come and get all of the benefits of yoga without leaving your chair. Call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032 for more information.

Distribution of this newsletter is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Sterling Council on Aging
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Sterling, MA 01564-0243

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