

Sterling Council on Aging

October 2009

Volume 14, Number 83

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

Senior Center Staff

Director:

Karen L. Phillips

Regular Driver:

George Guertin

Part-time Driver:

Pam Dell

Spare Drivers:

John Perry

Gloria Rugg

George Warden

Meal Site Manager:

Pam Dell

◆ COA Board

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Mary Higgins

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Message from the Director

The month of June may have been wet and annoying to most of us, but it really helped the apples! This is a banner year for apples in New England. If you get a chance to partake of the local varieties, sample away.

October celebrates Noah Webster's birthday. Noah Webster led an active life serving in the Revolutionary War, attending Yale College, teaching, doing clerical work, studying law, and being admitted to the bar. He is most known for his Compendious Dictionary of the English Language that he published in 1806. 100 years after he published his dictionary, it was hailed as the most significant contribution to the growth of English lexicography. In reality, the name Webster has become a virtual synonym for the word dictionary. I actually had to use the dictionary to look up "compendious" (it means succinct, concise). So the next time you don't know the meaning of a word and look it up, thank Noah Webster.

I hope everyone has a happy and safe Halloween.



Once again we will be having a Halloween costume contest on Thursday, October 29th, starting at 10:30 AM. There will be Halloween goodies before lunch. Prizes for best costume will be awarded during lunch. There will also be a Halloween inspired movie after lunch, for those who dare to stay! Sign up for lunch with Pam at 978-422-8022.

Is your birthday this month? Remember – there are no more notices for driver's license renewals. Make sure to check your license so that it is not expired.

The Senior Center would like to thank all of the people who helped with the Volunteer Yard Sale and Bake Sale last month. We appreciate your hard work!

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

Special Events for October

Thursday, October 1 – Needlework group at 12:30 PM. Come and work on your project with friends.

Tuesday, October 6 – Flu clinic from 12 – 2 PM. This is the regular flu shot. It is open to all Sterling residents over 60 years old. Please bring your insurance card with you.

Monday, October 12 – Senior Center closed for Columbus Day.

Thursday, October 15 – SHINE counselor will be at the Senior Center. Appointments required by calling 978-422-3032.

Thursday, October 15 – Elder Keep Well Clinic from 12 – 2 PM.

Thursday, October 22 – Book club at 12:30 PM. This month's choice is Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson.

Monday, October 26 – “Healthy Heart Talk” by the Head Cardiologist of the Clinton Hospital at 12:15 PM. This will be a great talk – learn how to keep your heart healthy. All are invited.

Tuesday, October 27 – USDA food distribution at 12 noon.

Thursday, October 29 – Halloween party at 10:30 AM. Goodies before lunch. Come in costume and prizes will be awarded during lunch. A Halloween themed movie will be shown after lunch.



*It is better to
look ahead
and prepare
than to look
back and
regret.*

*Jackie Joyner-
Kersey*

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

October 22 – Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson

November 25 (note date change) – Catching Genius by Kristy Kiernan

December 17 (note date change) – The Christmas Sweater by Glenn Beck

As always books can be picked up at the library or the Senior Center. We hope to see you all there.

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.

Tuesdays –

Exercise at 9:30 AM. Get in shape with a fun group of people and a certified instructor - \$3.00 per class.

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

Craft class at 12:30 PM. Create a painted treasure to keep.

Wednesdays –

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 - \$3.00 per class.

Line dancing at 10 AM. Kick up your heels and join in on this fun group.

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.

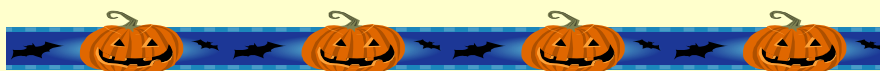
Elder Keep Well Clinic every third Thursday from 12 – 2 PM. You can have a private meeting with an RN for blood pressures, glucose levels, disease management, and medication counseling.

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

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. All you have to do is call us at least 24 hours in advance to make a reservation.

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



The Senior Center uses plastic bags on a daily basis. With everyone switching to reusable bags, we are running short. If you have a treasure trove of plastic bags, we would appreciate your donation. Thank you.

NEWS FROM SHINE SEPTEMBER 2009

You may qualify for a Medicare program that lets you pay as little as \$2.40 for prescription drugs.

For years you did your part by paying into Medicare. Now it's your turn to get the most out of the benefits you've earned. If you have limited income and resources, there's a Medicare program where you can pay no more than \$2.40 for each generic drug and \$6 for each brand name drug. If you qualify, this program helps pay your prescription copayments plus your other drug costs like monthly premiums and annual deductibles. Many people qualify and don't even know it.

Individuals who make less than \$16,245 and married couples who make less than \$21,855 may qualify to have lower Medicare prescription drug premiums, copayments, and deductibles. To qualify, these individuals' resources must also be limited to \$12,510 or \$25,010 for married couples. Resources include things like bank accounts, stocks and bonds, but not your house or car.

Applying for this program is free. Apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov or call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778) and ask for the Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Costs. All information provided in the application is confidential.

If you have limited income, you know that sometimes making ends meet means making tough decisions. That shouldn't mean going without your medications. Apply now to make sure you have the prescription drugs you need to stay healthy and keep doing what you love.

To schedule a FREE appointment with a SHINE Counselor, call your senior center. You can also reach a SHINE Counselor by telephone. Call 1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636), then press or say 3. Once you get the SHINE answering machine, leave your name and number. A SHINE Counselor will call you back as soon as possible.

SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders), is coordinated by the Mass. Executive Office of Elder Affairs in partnership with the Friends of the Milford Senior Center, 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.

Senior Oral Health – October is Dental Hygiene Month

Almost 250 million people or about 40% of the adult population in Europe, USA, and Japan are estimated to suffer from some form of edentulousness, or loss of natural teeth. Incidence of tooth loss generally increases with age. While the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) reports the prevalence of both partial and total tooth loss in seniors has decreased from the early 1970s, seniors over age 65 have lost an average of 13 teeth (including wisdom teeth) and 26% of seniors over age 65 have no remaining teeth. Whether caring for natural teeth or dentures, seniors face a range of special oral concerns, including root decay and periodontal disease. You can keep your smile healthy by following a routine of proper oral care and making regular visits to your registered dental hygienist and dentist. If you have arthritis or limited use of your hands, try adapting the toothbrush for easy use. Insert the handle into a rubber ball or sponge hair curler, or glue the toothbrush handle to a bicycle grip. Toothbrush handles can be lengthened with a piece of wood or plastic, such as a ruler, ice cream bar stick, or tongue depressor. For people who have dexterity problems and cannot use a manual toothbrush, an electric toothbrush may be easier to use and increase effectiveness. Numerous studies confirm that electric brushes are excellent plaque removing devices and are extremely effective in stimulating gums. Dental floss holders are also available. Among other benefits, daily brushing and flossing protect older smiles from two common problems of getting older: **root decay** – a condition that affects older adults if a great amount of root surfaces are exposed and **tooth decay** caused by the weakening or chipping of older fillings. Dentures, full or partial, should be brushed daily with a soft toothbrush or denture cleaning brush, using a commercially prepared denture powder or paste, hand soap, or baking soda. Toxic or abrasive household cleaners should never be used. Dentures should be brushed inside and outside, and rinsed with cool water. Remaining natural teeth and gums, especially those teeth supporting a partial denture, should also be brushed. When not in use, dentures should be covered with water or a denture cleaning solution to prevent drying.

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Veterans: Free legal help available by phone Oct. 15

The Massachusetts Bar Association is proud to host a supplement to its Dial-A-Lawyer programming: a session dedicated solely to veterans' legal questions. The free Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer program, a part of the MBA's Serving Our Veterans in the Law initiative, will take place on Thursday, Oct. 15 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer is provided at no charge as a public service of the MBA with the financial support of the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, the philanthropic partner of the MBA. The MBA acknowledges its partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services and thanks them for their important role in the success of the program. The MBA's Serving Our Veterans in the Law initiative also includes a weekly call-in service for veterans struggling with state and federal benefit appeals. Qualified veterans will be matched up with attorneys who agree to represent their case free of charge. Nearly half a million veterans live in Massachusetts, many of whom have pressing legal questions concerning benefits, divorce, child support, employment and landlord/tenant issues. The Veterans Dial-A-Lawyer phone number is **(617) 338-0610**. If a caller gets a busy signal, they are asked to hang up and try again. Normal telephone charges will apply. (EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: this number is only active from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 15.) If the caller is unable to get through on Oct. 15, the MBA offers a monthly Dial-A-Lawyer Program on the first Wednesday of every month from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. The phone number is (617) 338-0610.

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law.

The New Massachusetts Guardianship Law

This article reviews one of the changes implemented by the guardianship portion of the Massachusetts version of the Uniform Probate Code (MUPC). The guardianship portion of the MUPC implements a modernization of the law of guardianship and conservatorship. Rather than marginalize an individual with compromised ability, the MUPC looks to that individual's abilities rather than his or her disabilities. Although most of the changes are a natural extension of the body of law which already serves the commonwealth, the MUPC might make it more problematic for someone who has already been appointed a guardian to provide the care needed by an "incapacitated" person.

Reflecting on a telephone call I received but a few days ago: I received a call from a woman who had been appointed as the guardian of her mother about a year ago. The woman wanted to move her mother from the nursing home her mother currently resided in, to a different nursing home. However, the woman was told by the nursing home staff that she needed to seek authority from the probate court because pursuant to the guardianship portion of the MUPC (which took effect July 1, 2009), a court appointed guardian no longer had the authority to sanction such a move without first obtaining a Court Order. The caller was very distraught. She asked me why this was so and why the court would have appointed her as guardian if she was not able to move her mother from one nursing home to another.

I tried to explain that the Massachusetts courts already imposed substantial limitations on the authority of a guardian where extraordinary medical treatment was necessary. For instance in cases where treatment with anti-psychotic medication was necessary, the Massachusetts Probate Code incorporated the *Rogers* decisions. However, the MUPC goes beyond the *Rogers* restrictions and presumably, a *Rogers* proceeding, or something akin to a *Rogers* proceeding, will be necessary for every "new" admission of an incapacitated person to a nursing home, or any change of nursing homes. If the incapacitated person is currently a resident of a nursing home and no change in nursing home is intended, the court will not require the guardian to get court authority for that current placement.

So, under the new MUPC, if a guardian wants to admit an incapacitated person to a nursing home, or wants to move the incapacitated person to a different nursing home from the one he or she currently resides in, the law now says that: "*[n]o guardian shall have the authority to admit an incapacitated person to a nursing facility except upon a specific finding by the Court that such admission is in the incapacitated person's best interest.*" The new MUPC enhances protections for those under guardianship and acts to curtail the authority of a guardian. But in doing so it might make life a little more difficult for a guardian.

Attorney Nicholas G. Kaltsas practices law at Elder & Disability Law Advocates in Worcester, Massachusetts. This article gives general information and not specific legal advice on individual matters.



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 the First Baptist Church, 1216 Main Street, Holden. This month's distribution is Friday, October 16th. Proof of residency is required. The Pantry is also always in need of volunteers.



October Calendar of Events

(Menu subject to change)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – cheese hot pocket	2 11:30 – fish tenders
5 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Art class 11:30 – stuffed peppers	6 9:30 – Exercise 11:30 – ground beef stroganoff 12 – 2 – Flu clinic 12:15 – Game day 12:30 – Craft class	7 11:30 – chicken 1 – Van shopping trip to the Mall at Whitney Field (Searstown)	8 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – broccoli bake	9 11:30 – pot roast
12 Senior Center closed for Columbus Day	13 9:30 – Exercise 11:30 – chicken 12:15 – Game day 12:30 – Craft class	14 11:30 – roast pork 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	15 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – American chop suey 12 – 2 – Elder Keep Well Clinic	16 11:30 – meatloaf
19 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Art class 11:30 – macaroni and cheese	20 9:30 – Exercise 11:30 – turkey 12:15 – Game day 12:30 – Craft class	21 11:30 – stuffed cabbage 1 – Van shopping trip to Ocean State Job Lot	22 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – baked chicken 12:30 – Book club	23 11:30 – Salisbury steak
26 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Art class 11:30 – chicken 12:15 – Healthy Heart Talk	27 9:30 – Exercise 11:30 – cheese lasagna 12 – USDA food 12:15 – Game day 12:30 – Craft class	28 11:30 – fish tenders 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	29 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 10:30 – Halloween party 11:30 – SPECIAL: baked ham 12:30 – Halloween themed movie	30 11:30 – chicken primavera with penne pasta



In response to the economic times, the COA and the Selectmen have reluctantly agreed to start charging for the use of the van, starting January 1, 2010. There will not be any charge to come to the Senior Center for lunch or any function. It will be \$1.00 for any trip within Sterling's town limits (regardless of the amount of stops) to be paid to the driver at the time of the trip. It will be \$2.00 for any trip outside of Sterling (regardless of the amount of stops) to be paid to the driver at the time of the trip. If anyone is unable to pay, please contact the office. If you have any questions or comments, please call the office at 978-422-3032. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sterling COA
1 Park Street
PO Box 243
Sterling, MA 01543

Phone:
978-422-3032

Fax:
978-422-9916

E-mail:
kphillips@sterling-ma.gov

The annual Flu Clinic is being held on Tuesday, October 6th from 12 noon – 2 PM. This is open to Sterling residents over 60 years old. It will be held in the Selectmen's Room on the top floor of the Butterick Municipal Building.

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

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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