

Sterling Council on Aging

September 2010
Volume 15, Number 92

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

After this hot and humid summer, I am looking forward to the cooler days of fall. Usually the days are warm and the nights are cool – making it much easier to sleep. After slowing down for the summer, programs start picking up again in the fall. We will have 2 talks this month – about health and loss, and entertainment with Dawn and Dick. September also has the annual Sterling Fair, which is 3 days of fun for all involved. The town-wide yard sale is back on the 18th, and the Volunteers decided to join this event for the second year in a row. There is something for everyone at the yard sale – we hope to see you there!

Many of you come back to Sterling for the fall. Make an effort to come to the Senior Center. We need input from our seniors as to what programs and activities you would like to see at the Senior Center. The Senior Center is for all of you. We want to meet as many needs as we can. Your input is crucial in order for us to provide the services that are in demand. Thanks for your help. See you soon!

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

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

Thanks to MART, the Senior Center has a newer van. It is a little bigger and in better shape. Give us a call if you need a ride. We do our best to accommodate everyone.



The Senior Center would like to start up a Walking Club again. Exercise helps us age better and walking has been shown to lower the stroke risk in women. Walking is also inexpensive – all it requires are sneakers and a will to do it. Many find that walking with others is a better motivator. If you are interested, call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032.

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

Special Events for September

Thursday, September 2 – Needlework group at 12:30 PM

Monday, September 6 – Senior Center closed for Labor Day

Tuesday, September 7 – Blood pressures at 12 noon

Thursday, September 9 – “Music is Love” by Dawn and Dick at 1 PM. Back by popular demand, this amazing duo will play music on the keyboard and guitar while impressing us with their singing. Throw in magic, a few jokes, and free refreshments and it makes for a great afternoon. All are invited. This program is sponsored in part by a grant by the Sterling Cultural Council, a local agency, of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Monday, September 13 – “General Health and Preventive Care” talk by Dr. Iyengar at 12:15 PM. Come and learn the simple things you should be doing to take care of yourself.

Tuesday, September 14 – State Primaries: don’t forget to vote! The Senior Center Van will be transporting people to the polls from 1 – 3 PM. If you need a ride, give us a call at 978-422-3032.

Thursday, September 16 – SHINE counselor will be available to help with health insurance issues.

Appointments are required by calling the office at 978-422-3032.

Thursday, September 16 – Elder Keep Well Clinic from 12 – 2 PM. Meet with a nurse to discuss health issues.

Saturday, September 18 – Volunteers of the Senior Center annual Yard Sale from 8 – 2 PM. The yard sale will be in front of the Butterick Building.

Thursday, September 23 – Book club at 12:30 PM. This month’s selection is Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier. It is a historical fiction, based around the famous painting with the same name.

Monday, September 27 – “Life After Loss” by Judith Chaloux of Beacon Hospice at 12:15 PM. This presentation provides information of grief and bereavement, and how to assist others with hope and healing.

Tuesday, September 28 – USDA food distribution at 12 noon.



We are never too old to learn new things

As the new school year starts, make a commitment to learn some new things this month. Jumpstart your commitment by joining us as we learn together at the Sterling Senior Center using Generations on Line, a computer tutorial for seniors. No experience needed. Learn about Sudoku and chess, how things work, how to sign up for the Do Not Call List and stop those annoying sales calls, and much more. Is there anything you wished you knew more about? Let’s learn more about it. Join us. Call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032 to sign up.

*September days have
the warmth of
summer in their
briefer hours, but in
their lengthening
evenings a prophetic
breath of autumn.*

Rowland E. Robinson

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:

September 23 – Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier

October 28 – Dewey: the Small Town Library Cat Who Touched the World by Vicki Myron

November 18 – Still Alice by Lisa Genova

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 –

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.

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.

Generations On-Line, an internet learning program, is available for seniors to learn to use the internet.

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.

Do you have a steady hand? The COA is looking for some volunteers to be trained by the Cable Board to videotape programs at the Senior Center for future broadcast on the Sterling-Lancaster Cable Television channel. Anyone interested can contact the Senior Center office at 978-422-3032.

News from SHINE September 2010

How Will Health Care Reform Change Medicare

The newly enacted Health Care Reform (also called the Affordable Care Act) includes a number of changes to Medicare:

- **Lower prescription drug costs**
In 2010, anyone who reaches the Gap (donut hole) will automatically receive in the mail a one-time payment of \$250. Beginning in 2011, those in the Gap will receive a 50% discount on brand-name drugs and other discounts on generic drugs. Discounts will increase every year until the “donut hole” is closed in 2020.
- **Improved preventive care**
Starting in 2011, there will be free annual check-ups and no co-pays or deductibles for most Medicare covered preventive benefits, such as cancer and diabetes screenings.
- **Reduced Medicare payments to Medicare Advantage Plans**
Extra payments, which have been made to Medicare Advantage Plans for many years, will be **gradually** eliminated. Medicare Advantage Plans will not be allowed to cut any benefits **guaranteed** by Medicare.

It is very important that you *open, read and save* all letters from your Medicare Health Plan, your Prescription Drug Plan, Social Security, and Prescription Advantage (if you are a member).

During the annual Medicare Open Enrollment (November 15 - December 31), you will have a chance to CHANGE next year’s coverage, effective January 1, 2011. Certified SHINE (Medicare) Counselors can help you understand your plan changes, as well as other options you may have.

Your SHINE Program Staff and Volunteers will be conducting informational presentations at a majority of Senior Centers in the area during the months of October and November. We have almost completed our schedule and beginning in September, your local Senior Center will have more information available about the Place, Date and Time of your local meeting.

SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs 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.

September is National Cholesterol Education Month

High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease. In fact, the higher your blood cholesterol level, the greater your risk for developing heart disease or having a heart attack. Heart disease is the # 1 killer of women and men in the USA. When there is too much cholesterol (a fat-like substance) in your blood, it builds up in the walls of your arteries. Over time, this buildup causes “hardening of the arteries” so that arteries become narrowed and blood flow to the heart is slowed down or blocked. The blood carries oxygen to the heart. If the blood supply to a portion of the heart is completely cut off by a blockage, the result is a heart attack. High blood cholesterol level itself does not cause symptoms, so many people are unaware that their cholesterol level is too high. It is important to find out what your cholesterol numbers are because lowering cholesterol levels that are too high lessens the risk for developing heart disease and reduces the chance of a heart attack or dying of heart disease. Talk to your doctor for specifics, but keep these numbers in mind:

Total Cholesterol – less than 200 mg/dL

LDL (bad cholesterol – the main source of cholesterol buildup and blockage in the arteries) – less than 100 mg/dL is optimal

HDL (good cholesterol – helps keep cholesterol from building up in the arteries) – higher numbers are better and levels of 60 mg/dL or more help to lower your risk for heart disease

Triglycerides (another form of fat in your blood) – lower than 100 mg/dL

Besides medication, here are some things you can do to help your numbers:

1. Diet – reduce the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol in your diet
2. Weight – losing weight can help lower your LDL and total cholesterol levels as well as raise your HDL level and lower your triglyceride levels
3. Physical activity – regular physical activity can help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise HDL (good) cholesterol. It can also help with losing weight. You should try to be physically active for 30 minutes a day.
4. Quit smoking
5. Maintain a healthy blood pressure

Reprinted from the National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



The Health Benefits of Yoga

National Yoga Month is a grassroots, community-based awareness campaign to educate about the health benefits of yoga and to inspire a healthy lifestyle.

Heart disease – several trials have found that yoga can lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and resting heart rates, and help slow the progression of atherosclerosis – all risk factors for heart disease.

Breast cancer – research is showing that women who do yoga during and after treatment experience less physical discomfort and stress.

Menopause – a preliminary study found that menopausal women who took 2 months of a weekly restorative yoga class reported a 30% decrease in hot flashes.

Chronic back pain – doctors in Seattle compared 12 weekly sessions of yoga against therapeutic exercises and a handbook on self-care and discovered the yoga group showed greater improvement and longer lasting benefits.

Depression – research is showing that yoga can significantly improve mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Arthritis – early research has shown yoga helped osteoarthritis of the hands.

Yoga can be helpful and enjoyable. The Senior Center offers Yoga Thursday mornings at 9 AM. Feel free to come and try us out.

Gambling and the Elderly: Are Casinos Coming to Massachusetts?

The Massachusetts Legislature is deciding whether casinos should be allowed to be constructed and operated in Massachusetts. Everyone seems to have an opinion on whether or not allowing casinos in Massachusetts is a good idea. But this article is not about those opinions and I am intentionally keeping my opinions to myself. I want to tell you what the current status is of the Massachusetts “casino” bill.

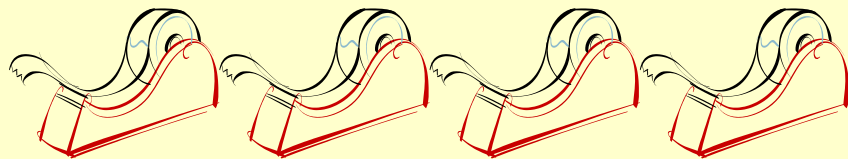
State lawmakers approved a bill that would allow for Massachusetts to have casinos and two slot machine parlors. Basically, what this means is that the state’s four racetracks would compete for the two slot parlor licenses. Governor Deval L. Patrick had warned legislators that he would not support a bill with slots at more than one track. So after the end of the legislative session, Governor Patrick sent an amended bill to legislators that had no slot licenses.

It would take a two-thirds vote in the Legislature to override Governor Patrick. The House Speaker Robert DeLeo said he wouldn’t make further compromises to save a bill to expand gambling in Massachusetts and that he was doubtful the Legislature would return to override Governor Deval Patrick’s rejection of the bill state lawmakers had approved. And the State Senate president was pessimistic that a compromise could be reached.

So although there is a possibility the legislators could be called back into session to revive the bill, a deal this year is unlikely. The push to legalize casino gambling in Massachusetts is probably over for now.

This article gives general information and not specific legal advice on individual matters.

Attorney Nicholas G. Kaltsas practices law at Elder & Disability Law Advocates in Worcester, MA.



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, September 17th. Proof of residency is required. The Pantry is also always in need of volunteers.



September Calendar of Events

(Menu subject to change)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 11:30 – hot meatloaf barbecued sandwich 1 – Shopping trip to Target	2 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – sweet and sour roast pork 12:30 – Needlework group	3 11:30 – macaroni and cheese
6 Senior Center closed for Labor Day	7 11:30 – macaroni and cheese 12 – blood pressures 12:15 – Game day	8 11:30 – turkey sandwich 1 – Shopping trip to Walmart	9 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – baked chicken with apricot sauce 1 – Music by Dawn and Dick	10 11:30 – American chop suey Don't forget to visit the Sterling Fair
13 10 – Art class 10 – Senior fitness 11:30 – baked fish 12:15 – General health talk	14 State Primaries 11:30 – roast chicken with BBQ sauce 12:15 – Game day	15 11:30 – smoky beefsteak 1 – Shopping trip to K-Mart	16 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – ziti with meatballs 12 – 2 – Elder Keep Well Clinic	17 11:30 – chicken a la king Saturday the 18 th – YARD SALE
20 10 – Art class 10- Senior fitness 11:30 – cheese lasagna	21 11:30 – chicken salad 12:15 – Game day	22 11:30 – baked chicken with supreme sauce 1 – Shopping trip to Walmart	23 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – broccoli bake 12:30 – Book club	24 11:30 – meatloaf
27 10 – Art class 10 – Senior fitness 11:30 – roast chicken with marsala sauce 12:15 – Life After Loss talk	28 11:30 – roast pork 12 – USDA food 12:15 – Game day	29 11:30 – chicken patty 1 – Shopping trip to The Mall at Whitney Field	30 9 – Yoga 10 – Line dancing 11:30 – sloppy Joe	



Kids are back in school this month. Please be aware of school buses and kids walking along the roads. Give yourself a little more time in the morning to account for the increased traffic to and from the school.

Senior Center Yard Sale – Don't forget to stop by the front of the Butterick Building on Saturday, September 18th from 8 – 2 to support the volunteers as they hold their annual yard sale. Getting a new Senior Center is expensive and any money we make is a big help. Donations are being accepted at the Senior Center until Friday, September 17th. Thanks for your support!!

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PO Box 243
Sterling, MA 01543

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978-422-3032

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978-422-9916

E-mail:
kphillips@sterling-ma.gov

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

Looking for consultants.

Are you newly retired or semi-retired and looking for something to do? The Senior Center is looking for talented people like you who can run a creative writing class, teach a language, teach a genealogy class, teach a jewelry making class, etc. Come in and share your talents with others. It is a great way to volunteer in the community while doing something you love. If you have the time and energy, please call the Senior Center office at 978-422-3032.

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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