

Sterling Council on Aging

September 2011

Volume 16, Number 101

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

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

Susan Duquette, Associate

Message from the Director

I hope the Summer has treated you well.

In order to try to meet the various needs of the seniors in Sterling, the COA board is planning on opening one evening a week. We are still working out the details but are considering card games, dominoes, craft classes, pool games, and/or movie nights. If you have any suggestions, please let us know. Our purpose is to help you, the seniors. Stay tuned for more information as we nail down the specifics.

Thank you all for signing in when you come to the Senior Center. These numbers are important for our reports, as well as to prove to people in town that the Senior Center is a necessity and being used. If you do not use us, give us a try. You might like it. We offer a broad array of activities. Most of the programs are free or at a low cost. We do not ask about income levels. All are welcome.

We are looking for a computer teacher. If you would like to be a consultant, helping seniors learn the computer or Internet, please contact us. If anyone has a skill that they would like to share with others, please contact us. We are always looking for new activities to offer.

Please stay vocal about our need for more space. There is still a large portion of the town which does not understand nor support the need for a Senior Center. The seniors in Sterling deserve better than the space we have to offer.

Enjoy the nice weather while you can!

The Volunteers' Annual Yard Sale will be on Saturday, September 17th from 8 AM – 2 PM, in conjunction with the Town Wide Yard Sale. Donations are currently being accepted in the Senior Center. If you would like to help with the yard sale or donate a baked good for our bake sale, please call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032.

We would like to thank the following people who donated baked goods for our programs last spring: Mary Higgins, Irene Camerano, Barbara Foster, Jean Pickering, Carmela Emerald, Anita Benware, Connie Cleary, Susan Duquette, Pam Dell, Sharon Bloom, and Shirley Rotti. Thanks a bunch!

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

Special Events for September

Thursday, September 1 – Needlework group at 12:30 PM.

Monday, September 5 – Senior Center closed for Labor Day.

Tuesday, September 6 – Blood pressure clinic at 12 PM.

Thursday, September 8 – “Jerry Atric – The Older I Get”, a play by Steve Henderson, will be performed at 12:30 PM. The performance features comical and touching stories about the healthcare experiences of an elderly man. Enjoy a humorous look at healthcare through the eyes of an elderly gentleman with a sense of humor and a joy for living. This program is supported in full by a grant from the Sterling Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Monday, September 12 – Hamilton Home Health will present a question and answer session on “Getting a Home Health Provider” at 12:15 PM. Deciding to seek in-home care can be a daunting task. The presenters will guide you through an informal question and answer session about everything you need to know when it comes to using the services of a Home Healthcare agency.

Thursday, September 15 – SHINE counselor will be available to assist with health insurance questions. Appointments are required by calling the Senior Center at 978-422-3032.

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

Saturday, September 17 – Volunteers’ Annual Yard Sale from 8 – 2 PM. There will also be a bake sale. Come and help support the Senior Center.

Thursday, September 22 – Book club at 12:30 PM. This month’s selection is The Year of Fog by Michelle Redmond.

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

Wednesday, September 28 – Gentle Chair Yoga and Relaxation by Michelle Jones from Corcoran House at 12:30 PM. Chair yoga is usually taught as a way to achieve physical and mental fitness. Clients can learn many kinds of yoga postures, breathing techniques, meditation, and ways of relaxation, with the aid of a chair. This class has been well received in the past. All are welcome. It is a good intro to yoga.



School is back in session. Be careful of kids walking to and from school and waiting for the school bus.

*“We turn not
older with years,
but newer every
day.”
Emily Dickinson*

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.

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 22 – The Year of Fog by Michelle Redmond

October 27 – Big stone Gap by Adriana Trigliani

November 17 (note date change) – Between Sisters by Kristin Hannah

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 –

Walking club at 8 AM at the Cider Mill, weather permitting.

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 September 2011
Medicare Open Enrollment is Changing!
New Dates: OCTOBER 15 – DECEMBER 7

The annual Medicare Open Enrollment (**October 15 - December 7**) is the time to enroll in or CHANGE your Medicare coverage for next year. State-certified SHINE (Medicare) Counselors can help you understand your plan, as well as other options you may have. Call now to schedule a SHINE appointment during the Open Enrollment.

In September, if you are a member of a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan, you will be getting information in the mail about changes to your current plan. Be sure to save this information and bring it, along with your prescription drug list and Medicare card, to your SHINE appointment.

Remember: The Medicare Open Enrollment ends on December 7!
DO NOT WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!

Affordable Care Act Update

Under the Affordable Care Act, people with Original Medicare can receive recommended preventive benefits and a new annual wellness visit without paying an additional penny out of pocket. In addition the Affordable Care Act is closing the prescription drug donut hole by providing increasing discounts on covered drugs in the donut hole. In Massachusetts alone more than **459,371** Medicare beneficiaries have received no cost preventive services. More than **15,631** beneficiaries have saved over **\$7,821,054** through the 50% discount on Part D drugs in the donut hole, this is an average of **\$500.00** per beneficiary. **The Affordable Care Act is working for Medicare Beneficiaries in Massachusetts.**

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.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day, September 23, 2011

Each year, thousands of older Americans fall at home. Many of them are seriously injured and some are disabled. In 2002, more than 12,800 people over age 65 died and 1.6 million were treated in emergency departments because of falls. Many falls can be prevented. Here are 4 things you can do to prevent falls:

1. Begin a regular exercise program. Exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Talk to your doctor about the best type of exercise program for you.
2. Have your health care provider review your medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall.
3. Have your vision checked. Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling.
4. Make your home safer. About $\frac{1}{2}$ of all falls happen at home. Remove things you can trip over from stairs and places where you walk. Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping. Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool. Have grab bars put in next to your toilet and in the tub or shower. Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors. Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Have handrails and lights put in on all staircases. Wear shoes. Avoid going barefoot or using slippers.

Reprinted from CDC Foundation



Celebrate Whole Grains Month in September.

You can easily add whole grains to your meals, often using favorite recipes you've always enjoyed.

- Substitute $\frac{1}{2}$ the white flour with whole wheat flour in your recipes for cookies, muffins, quick breads, and pancakes.
- Replace $\frac{1}{3}$ of the flour in a recipe with quick oats or old fashioned oats.
- Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of bulgur, wild rice, or barley to bread stuffing.
- Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked wheat or rye berries, wild rice, brown rice, sorghum, or barley to your favorite canned or home-made soup.
- Use whole corn meal for corn cakes, corn breads, and corn muffins.
- Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of uncooked oats for each pound of ground beef or turkey when you make meatballs, burgers, or meatloaf.
- Stir a handful of rolled oats in your yogurt, for quick crunch with no cooking necessary.

Studies show that eating whole grains instead of refined grains lowers the risk of many chronic diseases. While benefits are most pronounced for those consuming at least 3 servings daily, some studies show reduced risks from as little as one serving daily. The message: every whole grain in your diet helps!



Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking, and behavior. Many people have trouble with memory and this does not mean they have Alzheimer's. There are many different causes of memory loss. However, Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia. If you or a loved one is experiencing symptoms of dementia, it is best to visit a doctor so the cause can be determined.

Scientists have identified factors that increase the risk of Alzheimer's. The most important risk factors are age, family history, and heredity. Although the greatest known risk factor is increasing age, and the majority of people with Alzheimer's are 65 and older, Alzheimer's is not just a disease of old age. Up to 5% of people with the disease have early-onset Alzheimer's (also known as younger-onset), which often appears when someone is in their 40s or 50s. Those who have a parent, brother, or sister with Alzheimer's are more likely to develop the disease; and the risk increases when more than one family member has the illness. Finally, scientists know genes are involved in Alzheimer's. However, health professionals do not currently recommend routine genetic testing for Alzheimer's disease.

Experts now believe that there are some risk factors you may be able to influence. Head trauma: protect your brain – buckle your seat belt – wear a helmet when participating in sports – and “fall-proof” your home. Heart-head connection: growing evidence links brain health to heart health. The risk of developing Alzheimer's or vascular dementia appears to be increased by many conditions that damage the heart of blood vessels. Watch for high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and high cholesterol. Work with your doctor to monitor your heart health and treat any problems that arise. General healthy aging: finally, other lines of evidence suggest that strategies for overall healthy aging may help keep your brain as well as your body fit. Try to keep your weight within recommended guidelines, avoid tobacco and excess alcohol, stay socially connected, and exercise both your body and mind.

Recently on our radio show we have focused on the area of Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia and wanted to inform seniors and caregivers that we are hosting our 1st Annual Focus on Alzheimer's Awareness Symposium: “Life After the Diagnosis: Medical, Legal and Support Services” on November 10, 2011. Listen to “The Senior Focus” Saturday mornings at 11 AM on WTAG 94.9 FM/ 580 AM to hear more about our upcoming Symposium and how you can attend.

Attorney Kaltsas practices law at Elder & Disability Law Advocates in Worcester and Framingham, Massachusetts and hosts WTAG's Saturday morning talk show "The Senior Focus" at 11:00 AM. "The Senior Focus" can be heard on True Talk Radio -- 580 AM or 94.9 FM

Please feel free to call Attorney Kaltsas in Worcester at 508-755-6525 or Framingham at 508-620-4525. Or listen to *The Senior Focus* and call your comments or questions into the show at 508-755-0058.

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, September 16th. 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 9 – Yoga 11:30 – chicken patty parmesan 12:30 – Needlework group	2 11:30 – meatballs with Jardiniere gravy
5 Senior Center closed for Labor Day	6 11:30 – cheese lasagna 12:15 – Game day	7 11:30 – fiesta fish 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	8 9 – Yoga 11:30 – roast chicken 12:30 – Play by Steve Henderson	9 11:30 – sweet and sour pork
12 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – beef tips with gravy 12:15 – Home Healthcare Q&A	13 11:30 – chicken 12:15 – Game day	14 11:30 – SPECIAL: ham and cheese bake 1 – Van shopping trip to K-Mart	15 9 – Yoga 11:30 – diced chicken chili 12:30 – Elder Keep Well Clinic	16 11:30 – stuffed shells
19 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – turkey and cheese wrap	20 11:30 – butternut & cheese 12:15 – Game day	21 11:30 – roast chicken 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	22 9 – Yoga 11:30 – roast pork 12:30 – Book club	23 11:30 – hot meatloaf BBQ sandwich
26 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art Class 11:30 – penne with Bolognese sauce	27 11:30 – hot dog and beans 12 – USDA 12:15 – Game day	28 11:30 – turkey 1 – Van shopping trip to The Mall at Whitney Field 12:30 – Chair yoga	29 9 – Yoga 11:30 – Salisbury steak	30 11:30 – roast chicken with Marsala sauce



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Phone:
 978-422-3032

Fax:
 978-422-9916

E-mail:
 kphillips@sterling-ma.gov

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

*The Senior Center will be offering **A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls** class starting October 12th. Have you turned down a chance to go out with family or friends because you were concerned about falling? Have you cut down on a favorite activity because you might fall? If so, **A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls** is a program for you. Fear of falling can be just as dangerous as falling itself. People who develop this fear often limit their activities, which can result in severe physical weakness, making the risk of falling even greater. **A Matter of Balance** can help people improve their quality of life and remain independent. The class runs for 8 weeks and is open to 12 participants. The program cost is \$5.00. A workbook is provided and refreshments will be served. Please call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032 to register.*

The Senior Center is starting a contest. We are looking for a catch phrase to positively promote aging and the Senior Center. For example, Worcester's catch phrase is "Taking You in New Directions". We will be accepting ideas until October 31. In order to submit, we will need your name, address, phone number, and catch phrase. The COA board will be reviewing the suggestions. The winner will be notified and win a prize to be announced. You can mail your suggestion, email it, stop by and give it to the office, or call us. Let's be creative! We are looking forward to seeing your suggestions!

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Sterling Council on Aging
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