

Sterling Council on Aging

Living Out Our Sterling Years Together

February 2013

Volume 18, Number 114

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

Outreach Aide:

Nickole Boardman

Regular Driver:

Pam Dell

Part-time Driver:

Spare Drivers:

John Perry

Gloria Rugg

Lou Massa

Meal Site Manager:

Message from the Director

In December we congratulated Bertha Sanger on turning 98 and becoming Sterling's oldest resident. Bertha is active in the Senior Center, coming 2-3 times a week. She regularly plays Scrabble on Tuesdays and uses the Van to go shopping on Wednesdays. Bertha is a wonderful addition to the Center. I think we would all want to be 98 if we could be as active as Bertha. Congratulations Bertha!

Valentine's Day will be upon us this month. It is a great time to reconnect with loved ones. A simple card or a phone call can really brighten someone's day and yours as well.

The Building Committee is still working towards a new Senior Center. They meet almost every Thursday night at 6:30 PM in the Senior Center. They are working very hard to make sure that the seniors have a place that will adequately meet social, nutritional, and exercise needs.

Please stay safe during the winter months. Try to keep an extra day or two of water and food around in case of emergencies. If you need any help during the day, give us a call. We will do our best to help.

Happy Valentine's Day!



During bad weather, the Senior Center is usually open, even during school cancellations. Even so, some activities may be cancelled. It is a good plan to call the Senior Center on any questionable days. Yoga and Chair Yoga **will be cancelled** if there is a cancellation or delay at the Wachusett Regional School District. Lunch may be cancelled as well. Be safe. Call first.

♦ COA Board

Barbara Foster, Chair

Sharon Bloom, Vice Chair

Mary Higgins, Secretary

Constance Cleary, Treasurer

Anita Benware

Irene Camerano

Debra MacLennan

Peter Watson

Ken Day, Associate

Susan Doucette, Associate

Ellen Sesia, Associate

Meal Site Manager Volunteer:

Our Meal Site Manager has left the position to become our van driver. MOC in Fitchburg, who was the funder for this position, recently informed us that due to budget cuts they would not be funding the position any longer. If you are interested in volunteering weekly to do the ordering, maintain the paperwork, and handle the money, please contact the office at 978-422-3032.

The COA Board generally meets the 1st Thursday of the month at 4:30 PM in the Senior Center.

Special Events for February

Wednesday, February 13 – **Yoga for Back Care - Safely strengthen your core, improve your posture and relieve back pain** at 2 PM. The spine literally is the "backbone" of our bodies. We need strong, healthy back muscles to support our spines and hold our bodies in proper alignment. If you suffer with chronic or occasional back pain, arthritis, osteopenia, osteoporosis OR you want to prevent back pain and maintain a strong back and good posture, this class is for you! Yoga for Back Care will stretch and strengthen back muscles, while lengthening and de-compressing the spinal vertebrae. Give it a try, your back will thank you. Cost: \$3.00 Sign up at the Senior Center 978-422-3032. Drop ins welcome. Please bring a yoga mat if you have one (some mats will be provided) **Katie Cohen, RYT** has been teaching Yoga for 10 years, and has been at the Sterling Sr. Center for 3 years. Katie studied with Peggy Cappy and other expert yoga teachers to be able to offer safe adaptations for Seniors and others with physical limitations.

Thursday, February 14 – Calliope Young at Heart will be performing your favorite Broadway Songs at 12:30 PM. This is a group of retirees who sign their hearts out for performances around Massachusetts. They put on a wonderful show. We are lucky to have them! All are welcome. Free refreshments after the performance.

Monday, February 18 – Senior Center closed for Presidents' Day

Thursday, February 21 – SHINE counselor will be available to answer your health insurance questions. Appointments are required by calling the Senior Center at 978-422-3032.

Thursday, February 21 – Elder Keep Well Clinic from 12 – 2 PM.

Thursday, February 28 – Book club at 12:30 PM. This month's selection is Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford. All are welcome.



On Tuesday mornings at 9 AM, Sarah LaMountain, School Committee rep, will be available at the Senior Center to discuss the school department, school issues, the Senior Center, or any other questions residents have. All are welcome.

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.

All you need is love.
But a little chocolate
now and then doesn't
hurt.
Charles M. Schulz



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:

February 28 – Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford
March 28 – Homer's Odyssey by Gwen Cooper
April 25 – TBD

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 9 AM at the Cider Mill, stopped until Spring.

Chair Yoga at 9:30 AM. Get the benefits of yoga without leaving your chair. \$3.00 a class.

Computer class at 10 AM. Have your computer questions answered. Free.

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 \$2.25 donation is appreciated.

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.

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. The van is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons.

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

LGBT Rainbow Lunch Club for those 60+ on the 2nd Wednesday of the Month at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Worcester. Call 508-756-1545 X339 for more info.

News from SHINE February 2013
Help! My new Part D Plan doesn't cover all my medications!!

If you have a new Medicare Part D plan and have just found out that your new plan does not cover a drug you have been taking, you should know about transition refills. Transition refills may give you temporary coverage (one-time, 30 day supply) for a drug that is not on your new plan's formulary or that has restrictions (prior authorization or step therapy).

It is important to understand that a transition refill is only a temporary solution. You need to call your doctor right away to talk about switching to a drug your plan does cover or filing a request with your Part D plan for a "formulary exception" (which may or may not be approved).

A transition refill is not for new prescriptions. You can only get one if you were already taking the drug before you signed up for the plan. Also, a transition refill does not apply to drugs that Medicare doesn't require Part D plans to cover (like Valium and Ativan).

If you are in the same plan as last year, you may still be able to get a transition refill if your plan removed a drug you had been taking in 2012 from its 2013 formulary, for reasons other than safety.

Not all pharmacists know about transition refills. Ask your pharmacist to call your Part D plan for special instructions.

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.

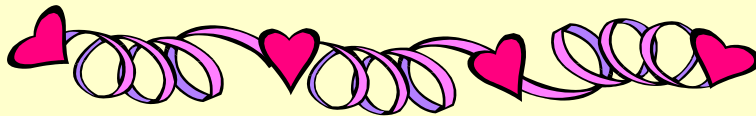
National Wear Red Day is February 1st

Red is always in fashion, but there is no better time to wear your favorite red dress, red tie, or pair of red shoes than on National Wear Red Day. Each year, the first Friday of February is a day when we call attention to the #1 killer of women: heart disease. It is also a day when we celebrate the women who are taking action to protect their hearts.

Taking good care of your heart means controlling your risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, physical inactivity, and being overweight. Having just one risk factor increases your risk of developing heart disease, and your risk skyrockets with each added risk factor.

National Wear Red Day reminds women and those who love them to take action against heart disease. It urges women to eat healthier, be more physically active, and talk to their doctors about their personal risk for heart disease.

Reprinted from the National Institutes of Health



Given the intense desire of scam artists to obtain very valuable personal information, we remind seniors to **NOT** to give out their social security number (or **any** other pertinent personal information, e.g., date of birth, address, etc.) over the phone to callers.

If the person is insistent, **Hang Up The Phone.**

Then call/contact:

- the Social Security Administration (1-800-772-1213) or www.socialsecurity.gov
- Medicare (1-800-633-4227) or www.medicare.gov
- Elder Services in MA (1-800-243-4636) -- TTY: 1-800-872-0166) or www.800ageinfo.com

If you did NOT initiate the call, **Hang Up The Phone.** Do **not** trust toll-free or other numbers from the party that called! If you want to confirm telephone numbers on-line, you (the senior) should use web-sites that end in **.gov** .

You can/should also call:

- the local police *business* line (*if non-emergency*)
- the Better Business Bureau (1-877-485-5906) or www.bbb.org;
- MA Office of Consumer Affairs (1-888 283-3757 -- toll free, in MA only) or www.mass.gov/ocabr
- the COA – to help it tell others about your concerns

from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Understanding the Fiscal Cliff

Well, they say we averted the “fiscal cliff”. I suppose as a technicality, we did. But most people do not fathom the mess the legislators and present administration has gotten us into. Federal spending is out of control and remains so. We were told there would be absolutely no tax hikes for the middle class. But the reality of the situation is as follows: a deal was struck at the 11th hour to avert fiscal calamity and not to go over the “fiscal cliff”. But there were no meaningful spending cuts. And for those still at work, have you seen your paycheck lately? Taxes did go up and they went up for everyone – including the middle class.

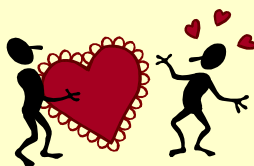
I received an e-mail the other day that put “fiscal cliff” in perspective. It went something like this:

- US Tax revenue: \$2,170,000,000,000.00
- Federal Budget: \$3,820,000,000,000.00
- New Debt: \$1,650,000,000,000.00
- National Debt: \$16,400,000,000,000.00
- Recent Spending Cuts: \$38,500,000,000.00

Now let's analyze this fiasco in terms of a household budget by removing 8 zeros so average Americans can grasp the severity of the mess we are in:

- Annual Family Income: \$21,700.00
- Money spent by the family: \$38,200.00
- New debt on the credit card: \$16,500.00
- Debt already existing on the credit card: \$164,000.00
- Spending cuts the family imposed: \$38.50

Attorney Kaltsas practices law at Elder & Disability Law Advocates in Worcester, MA, 508-755-6525.



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, February 15th. Proof of residency is required. The Pantry is also always in need of volunteers.



February Calendar of Events

(Menu subject to change)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 11:30 – Salisbury steak
4 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – grilled chicken with apricot glaze	5 9 – School Committee Chat 11:30 – chicken salad with cranberries 12:15 – Game day	6 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – ground beef and lentil stew 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	7 9 – Yoga 11:30 – empanada	8 11:30 – roast pork
11 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art class 11:30 – turkey chow mein	12 9 – School Committee Chat 11:30 – meatloaf 12:15 – Game day	13 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – baked fish 1 – Van shopping trip to Ocean State Job Lot 2 – Yoga for Back Care	14 9 – Yoga 11:30 – SPECIAL: chicken cordon bleu 12:30 – Entertainment	15 11:30 – pizza bagels
18 Senior Center closed for Presidents' Day	19 9 – School Committee Chat 11:30 American chop suey 12:15 – Game day	20 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – breaded chicken 1 – Van shopping trip to Walmart	21 9 – Yoga 11:30 – meatballs with Stroganoff sauce 12 – 2 Elder Keep Well clinic	22 11:30 – fish sticks
25 9 – Coffee hour 10 – Exercise class 10 – Art Class 11:30 – grilled chicken with mushroom gravy	26 9 – School Committee Chat 11:30 – Hoppin John (turkey ham with brown rice, peppers, and black eyed peas) 12:15 – Game day	27 9:30 – Chair yoga 11:30 – turkey 1 – Van shopping trip to K-Mart	28 9 – Yoga 11:30 – chicken meatballs with BBQ sauce 12:30 – Book club	



Sterling COA
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PO Box 243
Sterling, MA 01543


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978-422-3032

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978-422-9916

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nboardman@sterling-ma.gov

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

Nickole Boardman, Outreach Aide, is available to help any senior. She can help with paperwork, finding services, or just to be a friendly visitor. If you are interested, call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032. Nickole would love to get to know you and make sure that you are getting the services that you need.

February is National Cherry Month: Pain Relief and Bone Health – Cherries contain a substance known as anthocyanins. This substance is effective in relieving pain by blocking out the inflammatory enzymes that cause it. According to the California Cherry Advisory Board, eating 20 cherries is 10 times more effective than taking aspirin. Anthocyanins also work to relieve the pain associated with arthritis and gout. Cherries contain boron, which helps increase bone health when consumed in conjunction with magnesium and calcium. 

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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