



# POWDER HOUSE NEWS

**BERLIN COUNCIL ON AGING—BERLIN, MASSACHUSETTS 01503**

JANUARY/DECEMBER 2018

978-838-2750

COA@TOWNOFBERLIN.COM

## **EVENTS & ACTIVITIES**

### **JANUARY**

1/1 - HAPPY NEW YEAR!

1/4 - BERLIN SENIOR, FPC, PROGRAM & LUNCH AT NOON

1/12 - PIZZA NITE AT FPC, 5-7PM

1/9 - 19 CARTER RECIPE CLUB - 6:30PM

1/15 - MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY

1/24 - COA MEETING 3:30PM TOWN OFFICES, RM 118

### **FEBRUARY**

2/1 - BERLIN SENIOR, FPC, PROGRAM & LUNCH AT NOON

2/2 - GROUND HOG DAY

2/6 - 6 WEEKS TILL SPRING

2/9- PIZZA NITE AT FPC, 5-7PM

2/13- 19 CARTER RECIPE CLUB - 6:30PM

2/14 - VALENTINES DAY

2/19 - PRESIDENTS DAY

2/28 - COA MEETING 3:30PM TOWN OFFICES, RM 118

**ACTIVITIES AT 19 CARTER**

Open Monday through Friday (9am-5pm) and Saturday (10am-1pm).

## **HELP WANTED**

The Council on Aging is seeking to fill the position of **YOGA Instructor for Seniors**.

For information about these opportunities, contact George Pendergast at 978-758-1247.

## **Weekly Senior Activities**

**Tai Chi and Yoga** Classes are held every week in Room 118 of the Town Offices. All are welcome.

**Tai Chi** - Thursday 11am-12noon with Jeff Cote

**Senior Yoga** - Saturday mornings, 9-10:15am

**Balance & Fall Prevention** - Saturday mornings, 10:30-11:30am

- to teacher tba

\$2 donation suggested classes.

## **WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT ABOUT A DATA BREACH**

There are steps to take to help protect your information from being misused. Visit Equifax's website, [www.equifaxsecurity2017.com](http://www.equifaxsecurity2017.com). Find out if your information was exposed. Click on the "Potential Impact" tab and enter your last name and the last six digits of your Social Security number. Your Social Security number is sensitive information, so make sure you're on a secure computer and an encrypted network connection any time you enter it. The site will tell you if you've been affected by this breach.

Whether or not your information was exposed, U.S. consumers can get a year of free credit monitoring and other services. The site will give you a date when you can come back to enroll. Write down the date and come back to the site and click "Enroll" on that date. You have until January 31, 2018 to enroll.

Check your credit reports from Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion — for free — by visiting - [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com). Accounts or activity that you don't recognize could indicate identity theft.

Visit [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) to find out what to do.

Consider placing a credit freeze on your files. A credit freeze makes it harder for someone to open a new account in your name. Keep in mind that a credit freeze won't prevent a thief from making charges to your existing accounts.

Monitor your existing credit card and bank accounts closely for charges you don't recognize.

*Cont. on Col 3*

## **EQUIFAX BREACH**

The Equifax breach exposed names, addresses, birthdates and social security numbers of 145 million Americans. This is exactly the information a scammer would need to take advantage of a social security recipient - who hasn't yet set up their own "My Social Security Account".

**Any Social Security recipient who has not already set up their own "My Social Security Account" is advised to do so immediately!**

In case you are not aware, the Social Security Administration (SSA) provides an online service that enables a Social Security recipient to set up their own personal account with the SSA. Once your personal account is set up, it enables you to do a variety of tasks. You can view your earnings history and estimates of benefits. You can also manage your benefits online, such as changing your address or changing your direct deposit information.

In light of the recent Equifax breach, Scammers will seek to take full advantage of this SSA service. Therefore, a Social Security recipient

*Equifax Breach Cont. on Pg. 2*

*Cont. from Col. 2*

If you decide against a credit freeze, consider placing a fraud alert on your files. A fraud alert warns creditors that you may be an identity theft victim and that they should verify that anyone seeking credit in your name really is you.

File your taxes early — as soon as you have the tax information you need, before a scammer can. Tax identity theft happens when someone uses your Social Security number to get a tax refund or a job. Respond right away to letters from the IRS.

*/Source Federal Trade Commission*

**COA Mission Statement**: to enhance the quality of life of seniors in the community by providing services, education and other programs to meet their needs.

**Council on Aging Members:**

Chairman - George Pendergast; Secretary - Fran Gill; Members - Pat Wheeler, Kate Bliss, Karen Schultz, Lori Fearebay, Bev Baldwin.

**Meals on Wheels:** Meals delivered every Tuesday & Thursday  
Call 978-758-1247 for info.

**COA Bus:** Call 978-838-2750 to schedule a ride on the bus.

**Medical Equipment:** Contact Lori 978-804-8487 or jfearebay@msn.com

**SHINE Program (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders):** A counseling service providing info and assistance for Health Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, etc. Call 800-243-4636, Opt #3 to make an appointment with a SHINE counselor.

**Senior Citizens Association Officers:**

President - Judy Mills; Vice President - Bob McTague; Treasurer - Judy Mills; Ass't Treasurer - open; Recording Secretary - Judy Duff; Corresponding Secretary - Bev Baldwin

**Meetings** - are held at First Parish Church on the 1st Tue. of the month, September thru May; June @ Berlin Country Club. Call Judy at 978-838-0403 for more info. See Page 4 for program details..

**Well Adult Clinic and Blood Pressure**

**Screenings:** from 9:30-10:30 held at FPC before Senior meetings. Call: Tamara Bedard, Town Nurse, 978-772-3335 ext. 340 for any questions.

**Reminder: There will be no meeting if school is cancelled or delayed.**

**Powder House News:** A bi-monthly newsletter mailed to each senior household in Berlin with information on health, legislative issues, and topics of interest.

**Newsletter Editor:** Lucy Roseberry Ayers, 978-838-2790 To receive newsletter online, please send email to lucyayers@charter.net.

***THE POWDER HOUSE NEWS IS PARTLY  
SUPPORTED BY THE  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ELDER AFFAIRS.***

**CELSIUS & FAHRENHEIT  
CONVERSIONS**

The way to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit is to multiply the temperature by 1.8 and then add 32 to the product.

For example:

$$0\text{ C} \times 1.8 + 32 = 32\text{ F,}$$

$$100\text{ C} \times 1.8 + 32 = 212.$$

To convert temperature from Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 from the number and then divide the difference by 1.8:

$$90\text{ F} - 32 / 1.8 = 32\text{ C.}$$

(While not exact, you can also divide or multiply by 2 to simplify the equation.)

The Fahrenheit temperature scale is named for German physicist Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit in 1724. Fahrenheit is a temperature scale that bases the boiling point of water at 212 and the freezing point at 32 with 180 degrees between freezing and boiling points. Today, the scale is used primarily in the United States and some Caribbean countries. The rest of the world uses the Celsius scale.

The Celsius temperature scale, named for Swedish astronomer Anders Celsius (1701-1744), is used almost everywhere else in the world. There are only 100 degrees between the freezing point (0 C) and boiling point (100 C) of pure water at sea level air pressure.

**Friends Who Have Passed**

Ruth Sandini - 10/26  
Wayne Kraemer - 10/30  
Andrew Walker 11/3  
Yoshiko Sefton - 11/4  
Barbara Chiavaras - 11/15  
Margaret Lapan Lucci - 11/25  
Barry Matthew - 11/29  
Bruce Wheeler, Jr. - 12/4  
Beverly Mello - 12/20

*Equifax Breach Cont. from Page 1*  
ent who hasn't already set up their own "My Social Security Account" should do so ASAP. Otherwise, they may discover that a Scammer has already beat them to the punch, by using the data exposed from the Equifax breach.

Once a Scammer sets up a "My Social Security Account" (using the victim's breached information), they have the ability to make changes to the victim's account. They will make changes to the direct deposit info and have the money sent to a bank account - controlled by the Scammer.

Be sure to use a long and strong password when you set up your account by using the first letters of a sentence or phrase and mix it up with numbers and symbols. Use a mix of upper and lower case letters too and make your password at least 10-12 chars. long.

Once your account is set up, you can require that any changes to the bank account, into which your check is electronically deposited, can *only* be done at a Social Security branch office *instead* of through your online account.

Finally, if you already have a Credit Freeze in place, you will need to go to a Social Security office to open a "My Social Security Account", in person, because SSA will not be able to verify your identity online. Alternatively, you can temporarily "lift" the freeze on your Equifax file, for a few days until the Government can verify your identity.

For more information about setting up an account visit the SSA website. The website address is: <https://ssa.gov/myaccount/> /Source AARP

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **NEW BLOOD PRESSURE GUIDELINES**

The American Heart Association released new guidelines for hypertension (elevated blood pressure) on November 13, 2017. This update should spark conversation between patients and their health care providers so they can develop the best plan to manage concerns. This is a great time to encourage residents to have their blood pressure monitored regularly. We look forward to seeing folks at our well adult clinics and are also happy to make home visits for those who are homebound to create the opportunity for people to discuss hypertension and the steps they can take to prevent/treat this condition. For more information, check out the American Heart Association's links below:

<http://professional.heart.org/hypertension>

The New Blood Pressure Guidelines According to the American Heart Association:

-**Normal:** Less Than 120/80

-**Elevated:** 120-129/Less Than 80

-**High:** 130-139/80-89(Hypertension—Stage 1)

-**HIGH:** 140/90 or Higher(Hypertension—Stage 2)

-**Hypertensive Crisis:** Higher Than 180/120\*

**\*contact your doctor right away!**

### **COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS**

Nashoba Nursing Service & Hospice operates under Nashoba Associated Boards of Health. We are, in fact, one in the same. Not only do we offer both Home Health and Hospice Services, but we also serve as the Board of Health for the following communities: Ashburnham, Ashby, Ayer, Berlin, Bolton, Boxborough, Dunstable, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Littleton, Lunenburg, Pepperell, Shirley, Stow and Townsend.

We offer a variety of **Public Health Programs** to promote good health for all ages. The program is held in **Berlin** on the 1st Thursday of the month from 9:30 to 11 am at First Parish and is available to **all** seniors.

We invite you to drop by our clinic to meet with your town nurse for a wellness check. Or, feel free to contact the public health department for more information about how we may further support you in your efforts to be as healthy as you can be!

**Nashoba Associated Boards of Health**

**30 Central Ave., Ayer, MA 01432**

Your Town Nurses are

Tamara Bedard, RN

Community Health Mgr.

978-772-3335 ext.340

Susan Hoag, LPN

Community Health Nurse

978-772-3335 ext.357

### **ORAL DENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT FOR SENIORS**

About 75 percent of people ages 60+ have only some of their natural teeth.

Nearly 23 percent of adults ages 65-74 have severe gum disease.

Many older adults suffer from dry mouth caused by prescription and over-the-counter medications. It contributes to significant tooth decay and gum disease.

For these reasons, it's important that we encourage our seniors to practice good oral health habits including regular dental check ups.

**Interesting Web Links & Resources:**

<http://seniorsoralhealth.org/>

[https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/factsheets/adult\\_oral\\_health/adult\\_older.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/factsheets/adult_oral_health/adult_older.htm)

<https://www.toothwisdom.org/>

### **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, BERLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Dec. 8th marked the 90th anniversary of the opening of the Library at its present site. Plans are in works to celebrate with a few events in 2018. One of these events is to share your memories of the Library.

**The Council on Aging van is there for you when you need a ride to a doctor's appointment or going to market?**

Call COA, at least 24 hours in advance, to leave a message with date and time to schedule your ride. **Your call will be returned. Call 978-838-2750. Donations accepted.**

### **SNAP FOR SENIORS**

The Clinton Council on Aging was chosen as one of 14 COA's in Massachusetts to serve as a SNAP Outreach Partner (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

This program helps you and your family buy food needed for good health. If you meet the program guidelines, you will get a special debit card (EBT Card). This card comes with a certain amount of money already on it to pay for food.

You can use the card at most grocery stores, certain senior centers, and some meal delivery services such as Meals on Wheels. It works just like a regular debit card. You buy your groceries using the card and the cost is taken out of the total amount on the card. More money is put on your debit card on a monthly basis.

**Income guidelines** for households with an elderly or disabled member and households with dependent care expenses are (for example):

**Household of one person** - monthly gross Income \$1,915, annual gross Income \$22,980;

**Household of two** - \$2,585 monthly gross income and \$31,020 annual gross income.

The average national SNAP benefit for a senior living alone is \$119 a month. This can go a long way in helping seniors make ends meet.

For information, call the Clinton Senior Center at (978) 773-4747 and ask for Donna or Deb.

/Source—Clinton Council on Aging

**Thank you!**

Special thanks to the  
**Clinton Savings Bank** for their continued  
support in providing the postage for the  
*Powder House News*

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Berlin, Massachusetts 01503

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### **BERLIN FAMILY FOOD PANTRY**

The Berlin Family Food Pantry wants to thank everyone who attended the Beer and Wine Tasting in November and for the Wine Cellar of Berlin for sponsoring. It was a huge success and we could not have done it without the many volunteers that the BFFP is truly lucky to have. Many local groups in the community gave generously to the Pantry this past Thanksgiving and we were able to provide lovely meals to the clients. The Pantry could use personal items such as toiletries, small containers of laundry and dish soap, coffee, hearty soups and stews, pasta sauce, and fruit cups that are low in sugar. Visit our website at [www.berlinfamilyfoodpantry.org](http://www.berlinfamilyfoodpantry.org)

*Submitted by Valerie Muldoon of BFFP*

### **MEALS ON WHEELS UPDATE**

MOC Elder Nutrition Services is dedicated to fighting hunger and isolation among seniors 60 yrs. of age and older. Too many seniors are left behind, alone and hungry, struggling to stay independent and healthy. Did you know 1 in 6 seniors struggle with hunger? Meals on Wheels delivers the support that keeps seniors in their homes, where they want to be.

MOC and Subaru recently participated in the 2017 Share the Love Event (Nov. 16 - Jan. 2) to help raise critical funds needed to support our local seniors. Over the past 9 yrs., Subaru and its retailers have helped the MOW network deliver more than 1.7 MILLION MEALS to seniors.

### **SKINNER'S SHOW & TELL**

You won't want to miss Skinner's Show & Tell at the March 1<sup>st</sup> Senior Citizens meeting. This will be your opportunity to find out what your grandmother's tea set is worth, or the picture you bought at auction or that old piece of pottery stored away in your china closet.

Porcelain, pottery, dolls, silver, paintings, furniture and rugs are a few examples of items that are accepted for appraisal. Coins, stamps, jewelry, and musical instruments **are not**.

To participate in this event, you will have to register the item with Judy Mills, Senior Citizens president, prior to the event. Judy will have registration cards at the January meeting to be filled out with your name, the type and description of the item and, perhaps, a photo. There is a limit of one item per senior and it is limited to Berlin Seniors only.

Mark your calendars for the March 1st program. This should be fun and interesting for all! If you are unable to attend January's Senior meeting and wish to participate in the Show & Tell, contact Judy at 978-227-2664 for more information.

### **BERLIN SENIOR MEETINGS**

**Meeting:** 1st Thurs. of the month

**Well Adult Clinic:** 9:30-11 am,

**Meeting & Program:** 11 am

**Lunch** - 12pm, \$5, unless noted

**January 4:** at First Parish

**Program:** Travels with Bob & Mad-die McTague featuring their 10-day geological trip in photographs of the national parks in Utah.

**Lunch:** Shepard's Pie prepared and served by Lika from the General Store.

**February 1,** at First Parish

**Program:** Faces and Places of Berlin in Photos by Martin Miller. People encouraged to share stories.

**Lunch:** Another delightful meal (TBD) prepared and served by Lika from the General Store.

### **Seniors Just Want to Have Fun!**

Summer fun—Ice cream at Rota Springs Farm and COA lunch at Northbrook II

