



# POWDER HOUSE NEWS

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

MARCH/APRIL 2018

978-838-2750

COA@TOWNOFBERLIN.COM

## **EVENTS & ACTIVITIES**

### **MARCH**

- 3/1 - BERLIN SENIOR, FPC, PROGRAM & LUNCH AT 11AM
- 3/9 - PIZZA NITE AT FPC, 5-7PM
- 3/11 - DAYLIGHTS SAVINGS BEGIN
- 3/13 - 19 CARTER RECIPE CLUB - 6:30PM - 19 CARTER THEME IS 'BREAKFAST FOR DINNER'
- 3/17 - ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- 3/20 - SPRING BEGINS
- 3/28 - COA MEETING 3:30PM TOWN OFFICES, RM 118

### **APRIL**

- 4/1 - APRIL FOOL'S DAY
- 4/3 - BERLIN SENIOR, FPC, PROGRAM & LUNCH AT 11AM
- 4/7 VILLAGE POWER OPEN HOUSE & PANCAKE BREAKFAST 8AM-1PM
- 4/10 - 19 CARTER RECIPE CLUB - 6:30PM, FAVORITE APPETIZER
- 4/1 - PIZZA NITE AT FPC, 5-7PM
- 4/17 - TAX DAY
- 4/22 - EARTH DAY
- 425 - COA MEETING 3:30PM TOWN OFFICES, RM 118

## **ACTIVITIES AT 19 CARTER**

Open Monday through Friday (9am-5pm) and Saturday (10am-1pm). Visit <http://www.19carter.org/> to learn of special events taking place

## **Weekly Senior Activities**

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

All seniors are welcome

**Tai Chi** - Thursday 11am-12noon with Jeff Cote, supported in part by the *Massachusetts Cultural Council*.

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

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

\$2 donation suggested classes.

## **IRS WARNS OF NEW TAX REFUND SCAM**

Stolen taxpayer information can be used to steal refunds. The Internal Revenue Service is warning taxpayers of a fast-growing scam involving fraudsters stealing their information from professional tax preparers to file fraudulent tax returns.

The scammers use the data to arrange to send refunds to the taxpayers' real bank accounts. Then a scammer posing as a debt collector tells the taxpayer that a refund was erroneously deposited in their accounts and that it should be forwarded to a fake collection agency.

In another twist of the scam, the taxpayer who received the erroneous refund gets an automated call with a recorded voice saying he is from the IRS and threatens the taxpayer with criminal fraud charges, an arrest warrant and a "blacklisting" of their Social Security number. The recorded voice gives the taxpayer a case number and a telephone number to call to return the refund.

"Thieves know it is more difficult to identify and halt fraudulent tax returns when they are using real client data, such as income, dependents, credits and deductions," the IRS says. "Generally, criminals find alternative ways to get the fraudulent refunds delivered to themselves rather than the real taxpayers."

Taxpayers who file electronically may find that their tax return is rejected because a return bearing their Social Security number has already been filed by a scammer. If that happens, taxpayers should

*Cont. on Col. 3*

## **COMMUNITY CHOICE POWER SUPPLY PROGRAM CONSUMER NOTIFICATION**

The Town of Berlin is pleased to announce that Constellation NewEnergy, Inc. ("Constellation") has been selected as the supplier for its Community Choice Power Supply Program ("Program"). Constellation will provide electric power supply for all consumers participating in Berlin's Program. **YOU WILL NOT NOTICE ANY CHANGE IN YOUR ELECTRICITY SERVICE.** You will see Constellation printed under the "Supply Services" section of your monthly bill. You will continue to receive one bill from National Grid and to send your payments to National Grid for processing. National Grid will continue to respond to emergencies, read meters and maintain the distribution and transmission lines. Reliability and quality of service will remain the same. Furthermore, you will continue to have all existing consumer rights and protections.

Complete information is available at [TownofBerlin.com](http://TownofBerlin.com) website.

*SCAM Cont. from Col. 2*

follow the IRS' Taxpayer Guide to Identity Theft. Those who've already received erroneous refunds should follow these IRS guidelines.

Most data thefts of this kind occur because the preparer opened an email and clicked on a link or attachment that contained malware, which can download information, give thieves remote access to computers or allow them to see each keystroke. The IRS says tax professional should review this report to safeguard taxpayer data.

The IRS also points tax professionals to a Don't Take the Bait campaign, which describes scams used to try to deceive them.

**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 978-838-7348 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.***

**PRESCRIPTION ADVANTAGE**

Prescription Advantage is the state-sponsored prescription drug assistance program for seniors and people with disabilities in Massachusetts.

**Who is eligible for Prescription Advantage?**

Prescription Advantage is available to Massachusetts residents who are:

- Age 65 or older, eligible for Medicare, and have a gross annual household income less than 500% of the Federal Poverty Level\*, or \*100% Federal poverty level for a single person is \$12,060 & \$16,240 for two people.
- 65 years of age or older and not eligible for Medicare, or
- Under age 65, work no more than 40 hours per month, meet MassHealth's CommonHealth disability guidelines, and have a gross annual household income at or below 188% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Not MassHealth or CommonHealth members\*\*

\*\*In some cases, individuals receiving assistance from MassHealth to pay for Medicare Part A and/or Part B premiums, deductibles, and co-payments may still be eligible for Prescription Advantage.

**How Does Prescription Advantage Work with a Medi-**

**Friends Who Have Passed**

Judy Guzzi - 12/29  
Lawrence Wheeler - 12/29  
Ray Ellis - 1/6  
Nancy DiRenzo - 1/12  
William Tervo - 1/16  
Shirley Kenney - 1/18  
Douglas Heifner - 1/19  
Willard Wheeler - 1/22  
Theresa Rochette - 1/27  
Richard Garceau - 1/29

**Care Part D or Creditable Coverage Plan?**

Prescription Advantage supplements prescription drug benefits by helping to pay for medications covered by Medicare Part D or creditable coverage plans\*\*\*. Membership category determines when Prescription Advantage benefits begin. At that time, members pay no more than Prescription Advantage co-payment amounts.

\*\*\*Creditable coverage is coverage as good or better than drug coverage offered by Medicare and is usually provided by an employer or union.

**Not Eligible for Medicare?**

Prescription Advantage may be able to provide primary coverage to Massachusetts residents who are not eligible for Medicare.

For more information, call customer service at 1-800-243-4636) & press 2 or apply online at the following web address:

[www.prescriptionadvantagem.org/Application/ApplyOnline](http://www.prescriptionadvantagem.org/Application/ApplyOnline).

**ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW STRUGGLING WITH HIGH HOME HEATING BILLS?**

The federally funded **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** can help pay for home heating bills incurred between November 1, 2017 and April 30, 2018.

**Do Not Delay** - You can apply by calling New England Farm Workers Council (NEFWC) (North Central Massachusetts)  
473 Main St., 3rd floor  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 342-4520

## **BERLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY** **BUILDING 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY**

The Berlin Public Library opened on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1928 after many years of planning and fund raising. A celebration of the anniversary of this event will be held in conjunction with the Berlin Historical Society Meeting in October and we would like to invite citizens to participate in telling their stories and experiences about the library.

Please stay tuned for further information including a Berlin Public Library Newsletter containing photos, and a timeline of Berlin Public Library significant events. This will be sent to all households in town this summer.



Picture and article, circa 1966, provided Faith Linzee.

Preschool library story hour (a private project of the Berlin Tuesday Women's Club to supplement the government's Operation Headstart) is held simultaneously with parents' conference on pre-kindergarten preparation. Front, from left, Robert Mooney, Laura Merrill, Mrs. Russell Krackhardt, president of the club; Kendall Linzee, William Kessler and Wendy Krackhardt. Rear, Mrs. Frank Merrill, School Principal William Owens, Mrs. John Linzee, Mrs. Richard Kessler and Mrs. James Mooney.

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY ACTIVITIES**

The Friends are planning a **Library Friends Appreciation Open House** to be held at 19 Carter, April 15, 2-4pm.

Post card invitations will be sent to the people who support the Friends each year with membership dues and projects. Jazz pianist, Stuart Schulman will provide entertainment. Food and drinks will be served.

Everyone is invited to attend and new members are welcome.

*I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose I would always greet it in a garden. —Ruth Stout*

## **DISCOUNTS FOR SENIORS**

**McDonald's:** discounts on coffee and beverages (55+)

■ **Whataburger:** free drink with purchase of a meal, depending on location (55+)

■ **Wendy's:** give free coffee or other discounts depending on location

■ **IHOP** - 10% discount (55+) and a menu for people aged 55 and over at participating locations

■ **Subway:** 10% off (60+) varies by location

■ **Uno Pizzeria & Grill:** "Double Nickel Club" 25% off on Wednesday (55+)

■ **Papa John's Senior Discount:** check with your local stores (no standard senior discount policy)

■ **Friendly's Restaurants:** 10% off meal w/ free coffee at breakfast or free small sundae during non-breakfast hours

■ **KFC:** free small drink with any meal depending on location (55+)

■ **Burger King:** 10% discount on purchase depending on location (60+)

You might be surprised to learn that a lot of trendy shops give a senior citizens discount. At **Banana Republic**, if you over 50-years old you can get a 10% discount at stores, simply by asking for it.

At **Kohl's** on Wednesdays, over 60s can get 15% off. And on Tuesdays, outlet stores Marshall's will offer up to a 10% discount for seniors - though the exact age is determined by each store.

**Walgreens** hold a "Seniors Day" once a month too - which varies by location. Discounts of 20% are available for Rewards card members that are over 55 years old in store, and if you're shopping online you can get a 10% price reduction.

If you are 62 or older, you can get a 10% discount every Tuesday and Wednesday at Dress Barn. **Goodwill** gives 10%-20% discounts varying by store.

Just remember to check with the specific store in your area, as discounts might vary and

## **LINK FOR BURN PERMIT**

<http://www.massfire.net/brush/berlin.php#>

**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.**



**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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Council on Aging  
Berlin, Massachusetts 01503

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### **19 CARTER RECIPE CLUB**

Bring a dish and a recipe to share to the Recipe Club gathering that meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at 19 Carter. The theme for March 13th is 'breakfast for dinner'. On April 10th, we'll be looking for your favorite appetizer.

The event is hosted by Ann Phipps.

### **VILLAGE POWER EQUIPMENT OPEN HOUSE AND PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

Saturday, April 7th, 8am to 1 pm  
Village Power Equipment Open House and Pancake Breakfast, South Berlin MA near the Post Office,

Raffle drawing at noon. Prizes include Google Home:

- A Day of Sailing for up to 4 people
- lawn and garden equipment,
- and many more great prizes.

Raffle tickets on sale Saturdays at the Berlin Transfer Station.

\$1.00 each, 6 for \$5.00

Contact Lion Dave Westerling at 978 549 8252 for more info about the raffle and joining the Berlin Lions Club.

### **TAX BREAKS FOR SENIORS**

If you're 70 or older and haven't already looked into it, you might be eligible for a tax break. Cities and towns may give property tax exemptions to some individuals as defined by state law. An exemption discharges a taxpayer from the legal obligation to pay all or a part of the tax assessed for the fiscal year.

You can obtain the ATB's guide to the property tax appeal process from its website ([www.mass.gov/atb](http://www.mass.gov/atb)) or by calling 617-727-3100.

### **ELDER CARE 2018**

The Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging will be hosting the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Elder-Care 2018*!

This year's theme will be *Engage at Every Age*. The theme emphasizes that you are never too old or (young) to take part in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It also celebrates the many ways in which older adults make a difference in our communities. The event will be held on Tuesday May 8 at The Manner on 42 West Boylston Street (rte. 12) in West Boylston. The event itself is from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We invite you join us for this amazing event. The event will feature:

- Great Entertainment
  - Refreshments and healthy food sampling
  - Giveaways and Raffles
  - Health Screenings and Information
  - Informative Seminars
  - Several exhibiting companies
- Please come join us in honor of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this amazing event!

For more information:

Please contact Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging  
Alicia McKeon  
Director of Outreach & Education  
(508) 852-5539  
[AMcKeon@SeniorConnection.org](mailto:AMcKeon@SeniorConnection.org)

### **BERLIN SENIOR MEETINGS**

**When:** 1st Thurs. of the month  
**Well Adult Clinic:** 9:30-11 am,  
**Meeting & Program:** 11am  
**Lunch:** 12pm, \$5, unless noted

**March 1:** at First Parish Church  
**Program:** *Skinner's Show & Tell*  
**Lunch:** Beef Stew, salad and rolls, prepared by Lika of the General Store

**April 5,** at First Parish Church  
**Program:** Mel Simons—WBZ Radio Personality, will delight and entertain the seniors through audience participation, prizes and fun. The artist provides comedy trivia and music. (This program is supported by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.)

**Lunch:** Baked Macaroni with Cheese, Spiral Ham, and vegetables, prepared by Lika of the General Store.

**Not a member** of the Berlin Senior Citizens yet? Stop in at any meeting and join us for fun and activities. Membership fees are only \$10, \$5 for seniors 90 or over.

### **NOTES FROM THE TOWN CLERK**

Please return the **Census Forms** if you haven't already done so. They can be dropped off at the Library, Town Offices, faxed to 978-838-0014 or mailed to the Town Clerk at Berlin Town Offices, 23 Linden St., Berlin, Ma 01503