



# Powder House News

March/April 2022

## **COA Mission**

Our mission is to enhance the quality of life of seniors in the community by providing services, which include nutrition, health screening, education, and other programs to meet their needs.

## **COA Board Meetings**

Board meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m., March 29 and April 26.

## **Office Location**

The Council on Aging office is located at the Town Offices, 23 Linden St., bottom floor, Room 118.

## **COA Members**

Bob Blair, *Co-Chair*  
Pat Wheeler, *Co-Chair*  
Kate Bliss  
Rachel Boyer  
Wes Durant  
Lori Fearebay  
Karen Schultz

## **Phone**

978-838-2750

## **Medical Equipment**

The COA has a supply of medical equipment available. We accept donations of thoroughly clean equipment in good condition. Please consider donating your clean, used equipment so we can pass it on to someone in need. Contact Victoria Flynn at [coadirector@townofberlin.com](mailto:coadirector@townofberlin.com), or the COA phone 978-838-2750.

## **Transportation Services**

Transportation is available Monday through Friday. Rider information forms are available on the Berlin town website under Boards & Committees / Council on Aging / Bus Services. Call 978-838-2750 for assistance.

## **From COA Director Victoria Flynn**

### **COVID-19 Updates**

If you need a booster but are HOMEBOUND, call (833) 983-0485 to schedule an appointment.

We are working with the Board of Health and Fire Department to arrange a COVID-19 test kit drive thru. If you cannot attend in person, please call us at 978-838-2750 to get your kits delivered.

### **Grab and Go Meals**

We had offered a grab and go meal through Chef Du Jour at the end of December. With overwhelming positive feedback, we will be offering another meal at the end of March. We are asking people to RSVP to the COA by MARCH 14th. You can call us at 978-838-2750 or email at [coadirector@townofberlin.com](mailto:coadirector@townofberlin.com). We are offering a Salmon dish, Chicken Parmigiana or Lasagna.

### **FCP Live In**

In late December, the COA was pleased to have a meeting with Richard Williams, liaison with FCP Live In. FCP Live In is a company that will help families keep their older loved ones at home by providing a live in caregiver. This caregiver can give help with various activities of daily living. Many families will come across the situation where they have a loved one that cannot safely remain at home without near constant support. Having informal caregivers (spouses, children, siblings, friends, etc.) can definitely help to keep loved ones at home, but it may not always be enough.

Richard notes that FCP will work with whatever services are in place, including hospice care. FCP Live In services is a private pay service that will closely match their caregivers to families. These caregivers live with their clients and they will be there 24/7, which is good if there are concerns about safety in the overnight hours. Many private pay agencies will provide some services but they have a minimum number of hours that are needed and it is several different people coming in. With FCP Live In, you have the same person, allowing for an in-depth connection and rapport building.

FCP Live In does ask for a minimum of 2 weeks for services, so this may be an option for families to do a trial. Also, FCP Live In only needs a 48-hour notice for services to end. Services can be paused if needed (going on vacation or person is in the hospital) with proper notice to FCP Live In. Supervisors check in with their staff daily and arrangements can be made if needed for multiple live ins.

The reality is that for those who do not qualify for MassHealth, private paying for a nursing home or assisted living can cost a lot of money. FCP Live In charges \$290/per day and it allows people to remain in their homes, in the environments they want to be in. If you are interested in reaching out to get more information, please check out <https://www.liveinhomecare.com/> or you can contact Richard directly at 978-551-0309 or [richard.williams@fcplivein.com](mailto:richard.williams@fcplivein.com)

A worksheet on documents you should have is on the Town of Berlin COA website. Any questions about elder law? Attorney Romano can be reached at 508-393-0800. Attorney Romano has offices in Northborough and Natick and is accepting new clients.



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Berlin Council on Aging

06-5323

## A TALE OF TWO SENIORS

Two Berlin seniors were recently presented the Boston Post Cane award, one posthumously, as Berlin's oldest resident who has lived in Berlin continuously for at least five years. This award tradition, observed in 431 towns in New England, was created in 1909 by "The Boston Post" newspaper.

Three weeks shy of his 99th birthday, ARTHUR LANGE'S in-person award ceremony was waylaid by his death on January 21, 2022. Instead, his son Jeff will accept his commemorative pin on his behalf.

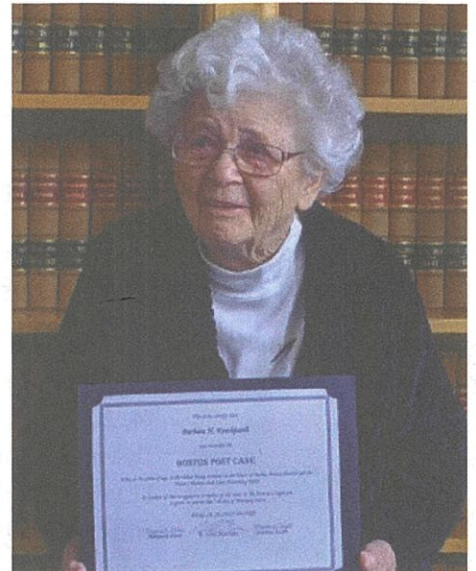
Born in Clinton, Arthur was a long-time resident of Berlin. An Army Air Corps veteran of World War, he married Evelyn V. (Knipe) Lange, who died in 2006. Together, they raised their four children in Berlin. Following employment in other fields, Arthur and Evelyn owned and operated the Berlin General Store for 16 years. Arthur retired from Digital Equipment Corporation in 2006. Possessed of an easy-going and gregarious nature, the Langes hosted gatherings of friends and family at their Berlin home for 56 years. Arthur's 70-year love of golfing was highlighted by the four holes-in-one he aced on the links. "Honest Art" will be missed by his family, regulars at the Country



Store, fellow golfers and his supportive coffee buddies at Hudson's Honey Dew Donuts.

Arthur's successor as Berlin's most senior living resident is BARBARA KRACKHARDT, who, at 96, has resided in Berlin since 1948, when she married Berlin resident Russell Krackhardt.

Barbara holds a degree in elementary education from what is now Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. After teaching in Ohio for one year, she interviewed for a teaching position in Worcester. Immediately hired, Worcester's offer of \$2500. per year with full benefits was changed to a substitute teacher's lower pay scale with no benefits when she noted her intention to marry within the month. Leaving Worcester after one year, she taught first grade at Berlin Memorial School the year the school opened, including in her scholarly young flock both Barry Eager and Judy Christensen. In a piece of appropriate coincidence, the room where Barbara taught that first grade class is now the Select Board's office, and it's the space in which she just received the Boston Post Cane recognition. Thinking back on it, Barbara might well have reflected on how handy that cane might have been when Barry and Judy and their chums were raising hob in their classroom. While out on maternity leave during her tenure at Berlin



Memorial, Barbara was tapped to start a town kinder-garten program that was eventually housed at First Parish Church. Before her retirement at age 67, she taught for 20 years in the Northborough school system, earning Teacher of the Year accolades while at Peaslee School.

Barbara's love of music found expression in her 50 years as director of children's, junior and senior choirs at First Parish Church, and in her direction of several musical variety shows over the years that raised funds for various organizations.

Heartiest congratulations and gratitude to both Arthur and Barbara for the examples they have set for giving so generously of themselves during their long and fruitful lives among us.

**LASAGNA LOVE** 



Hi everyone! I'm Margie aka The Lasagna Lady. I'm a proud Lasagna Chef and the Regional Leader for close to 30 communities in Massachusetts. It's my job to match families with volunteers for what is a very win-win exchange. Lasagna Love is more than "just" lasagna. Our volunteers provide homemade lasagnas, at absolutely no cost, for anyone who could benefit from one. Need is not only financial. In fact, oftentimes it is not. We all need a little love sometimes and the kindness of a stranger is just the sort of love we need! We are a neighbors helping neighbors non-profit working to relieve stress and lift hearts by helping to put dinner on the table. If you would like a home cooked meal, I encourage you to request one! If you love to cook and want to give back to your community, I have an awesome volunteer opportunity for you! So please, take a moment and head over to [www.lasagnalove.org](http://www.lasagnalove.org) and submit a request for yourself or nominate a friend!

**To request:** [www.lasagnalove.org/request](http://www.lasagnalove.org/request)

**To volunteer:** [www.lasagnalove.org/volunteer](http://www.lasagnalove.org/volunteer)

Don't have a computer or not a fan of the internet? Reach out to the Berlin Council on Aging to request a form!

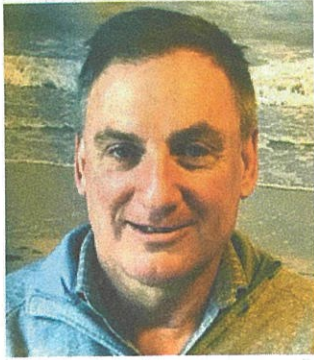
## Meet Your Town Movers

RICHARD HANKS is Berlin's Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer. His office in the Town Offices at 23 Linden Street is where you go to apply for building permits and to have your questions answered about compliance with State Building Code requirements.

PAUL MIKELK is the current Chairman of the Berlin Board of Health. He has also devoted thousands of hours to the reconstruction and landscaping of XIX Carter over the last 14 years.

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### Meet Richard Hanks, Berlin's Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer



I am pleased to introduce myself. My name is Richard Hanks, and I am the Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer. I have held this position since November 14, 2019. Prior to coming here to Berlin, I was the Building Commissioner for the Town of Townsend for 22 years. Prior to becoming a Building Official, I ran a contracting business for 11 years. As the Building Commissioner I am responsible to review building permit applications and building plans for compliance with the State Building Code, issue building permits and conduct inspections during varying points of construction to be sure that buildings are being constructed in compliance with the State Building Code and are safe. Another responsibility is to conduct safety inspections on restaurants, schools, churches, apartment buildings and other places of assembly.

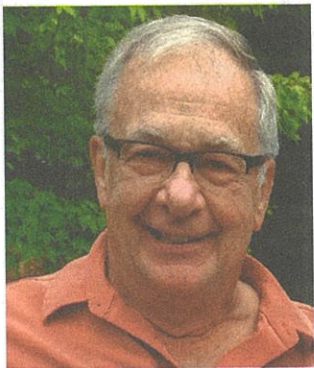
As the Zoning Enforcement Officer, I review proposed building projects to be sure that the proposed use is allowed in the various zoning districts throughout the town. I also enforce the zoning bylaws, so if someone is doing something on their property that is not allowed or is in violation of the by-laws, it is my job to bring them into compliance.

I reside in Gardner with my wife Karen. We have 2 sons Richard and Nathan, 2 grandsons, Brody and Logan and 2 granddaughters Mollie and Emma-Jane.

I have been warmly welcomed here in Berlin and enjoy serving this great community.

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### Meet Paul Mikelk, current Chairman of the Berlin Board of Health



I have lived in Berlin for almost 50 years. I grew up in Boylston and while attending Tahanto I discovered Berlin. In the early 70's while looking for a house to buy the former Berlin House Hotel came on the market (across the street from St. Joseph's church). The property was near derelict when I purchased it. I was young, naïve and under capitalized at the time. Now it has become my life's "hobby" resurrecting it. Over the last 30 years working along with my wife Mary we have created many unique garden spaces around the property to enjoy.

During my early years in town, I was appointed to the Conservation Commission and the Board of Health to fill out vacant terms. Subsequent to that I chaired the committee that transitioned the town from operating a landfill to running the transfer station. I also served on the committee that brought cable TV into the town. Currently I serve as the Chairman of the Board of Health and have been an elected member of the board since 2004.

Over the last 10 years I have served as the pro-bono project manager for 19 Carter, where I have utilized my skills in construction and landscaping. 19 Carter is truly a unique asset to the town and my work there is a labor of love — much like the work at my house at 119 Carter Street.

#### Durable Medical Equipment

The COA has been glad that we have been able to receive and give out various equipment to our residents and neighboring residents. We continue to receive equipment that has been dropped off without knowledge and approval of the COA.

The COA **only** accepts walkers, wheelchairs (non-electric), crutches, commodes, raised toilet seats and rollators that are **thoroughly cleaned**. Please call 978-838-2750 or email [coadirector@townofberlin.com](mailto:coadirector@townofberlin.com) to see if any equipment that you may have can be donated. The COA will throw out anything that does not get pre-approval.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

For a complete listing of the meeting times and places of all Berlin town boards, commissions and committees, go to the "[mytowngovernment.org](http://mytowngovernment.org)" website and click on "berlin, ma"

### COA

**Tuesdays from 1-2 p.m.**

Tai Chi with Jeff Cote in COA room 118 on the lower level of the Town Office Building at 23 Linden Street.

**Saturdays from 9-11 a.m.**

Senior Yoga with Sharon Santello via Zoom or in the COA Room 118 on the lower level of the Town Office Building at 23 Linden Street

### XIX CARTER

Activities going on at XIX Carter during January and February of 2022 may be found below in a separate article.

### LIONS CLUB

**April Scrap Metal Drive:** date to be determined

**May 21:** Golf tournament at Berlin Country Club

## BERLIN CHURCHES

### First Parish Church

**Worship at the Meetinghouse:** 10 a.m. Sundays, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20, 4/3 (Palm Sunday), and 4/17 (Easter)

**Worship only online:** Sundays, 3/27 and 4/24

### St. Joseph The Good Provider Catholic Church

**Daily mass:** Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 a.m.

**Weekend masses:** Sat., 5:30 p.m., Sun., 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

**Special 70th anniversary cornerstone blessing.** Saturday, March 19 at 5:30 p.m. St. Joseph's Day.

**Ash Wednesday services:** Wed., March 2 at 7 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m.

**Holy Thursday:** April 14

**Good Friday service:** April 15 at 3 p.m.

**Holy Saturday:** April 16, time to be determined

**Easter Sunday:** April 17 at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

## XIX CARTER

### Open:

**Mondays** 1-4 p.m.

**Tuesdays** 12-4 p.m.

**Wednesdays** 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Thursdays** 1-4 p.m.

**Fridays** 9 a.m.-Noon

### Weekly activities:

**Mondays 1-4 p.m.**

TeaTime

**Tuesdays Noon-1 p.m.**

**Box Lunches:** Join us for lunch — enjoy a freshly-made Box Lunch delivered on Tuesdays to 19 Carter by Berlin's General Store or bring your own. Get out of the house to visit with friends and neighbors. For those with children at home, the lower level play area will also be available. Suggested donation \$5 for the Box Lunch.

**Tuesdays 1:30-3 p.m.**

**History Matters:** Please join Historical Commission Chair June Miller to ask questions and find out the when and where of something

"old". Opportunities over the winter and spring to share your stories about people and places in Berlin and learn strategies for preserving family papers and photos will be welcomed. *Learning about the past informs the present and helps us make better choices for the future.*

**Wednesdays 9-11 a.m.**  
Community Coffee

**Wednesdays 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**2nd and 4th Wednesdays Old Time Music Jam**  
All acoustic string players are welcome to join us for a round robin 'Old Time' session of historic tunes and songs from 18th C-early 20th C Appalachia and New England. Come to play or to listen — bring your lunch if you wish. All are welcome. Suggested donation: \$5

**Every Wednesday: 7-9:30 p.m.** The Groton Session, a group of local amateur musicians playing Celtic tunes, play a variety of instruments typically found

in Irish pub sessions, such as fiddle, whistle, guitar, banjo, concertina, button accordion and bodhran, and enjoy a typical repertoire of jigs, reels, waltzes, polkas, hornpipes and barn dances. Players and listeners are welcome. Suggested donation: \$5

**Thursdays 1-4 p.m.**

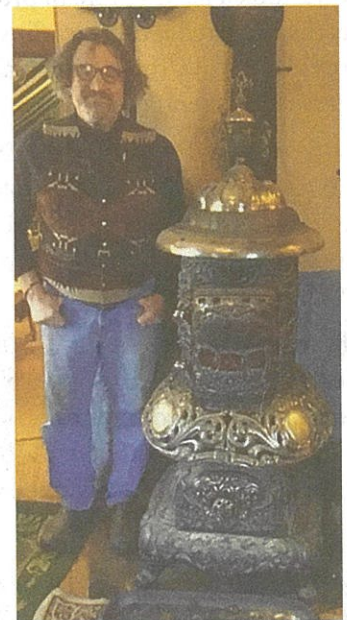
**Cribbage:** Stop by Thursday afternoons for a game of cribbage or other games that might grab your fancy or bring a book to read on the couch or work on the puzzle ... all are welcome!

**Fridays 9-Noon Community Coffee**

**Sunday March 20 at 4 p.m.**

**Artistry in Iron Display**

David Erickson will speak about the history of these beautifully restored antique stoves. He has restored stoves for the National Park Service, Henry Ford Museum, Albany Institute of History and Art as well as individual customers like Michael Strahan, Whoopie



Goldberg, Ralph Lauren, Steven Tyler, Union Oyster House, The Barking Crab and McSorley's Ale House in NYC. This exhibit represents his life long collection of some of the most beautiful, early and unusual stoves.

For more info please see [19Carter.org](http://19Carter.org) or check our facebook page at [facebook.com/19CarterCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/19CarterCommunity).

## The Five W's

The answers to the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and WHY of the 1805 Berlin Hearse House are answered in this article by Rebecca Von Geldern, a Director of the Berlin Art and Historical Society.

### THE 1805 HEARSE HOUSE COMES HOME TO BERLIN



*Tim Wohlhueter and a crew of Berlin volunteers move Hearse House timbers into waterproof storage in Berlin on Saturday, February 12 of this year.*

In the 19th Century, before we had funeral directors, the Town took a leading role in providing help to families when deaths occurred. Simple coffins and burial cloths were provided by the Town, which also maintained a horse drawn hearse for general use.

At the Annual Meeting of the District of Berlin, March 4, 1805 under Article 7, It was voted to procure a "herse" and build a house for it. Levi Merriam, Solomon Howe, and Henry Powers were chosen as a committee and funds were granted for those purposes.

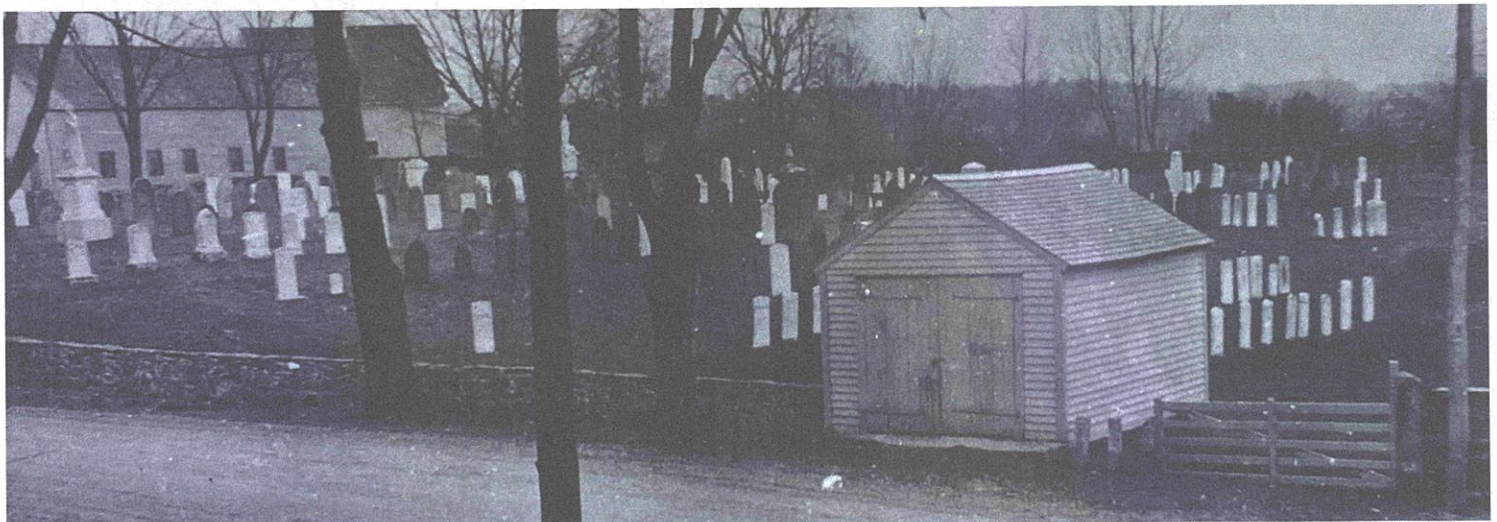
Thomas Pollard was paid \$22.00 in full for building the Hearse House and his son Stephen Pollard received \$3.00 for painting it. The committee procured hinges for \$3.25. The above payments, with a few other minor items, kept the cost of the building to slightly under \$30.00. The dimensions are

as follows: 16 ½ feet long by 12 ½ feet wide with a height of 8 ½ feet to the eaves and 13 feet to the ridgepole.

Its original location was likely on the Common, possibly near the present steps of the 1870 Town Hall. In 1816 the Town moved it to the Burying Ground, locating it in the front stone wall. There it remained for over a century. In 1926 it was sold to Mr. Bernard Wheeler for \$25.00 and moved to his home at 24 Woodward Ave to be used as a garage. The Berlin Art and Historical Society purchased the building from later owner, Robert and Fran Gill in 1973 and moved it back to the Burying Ground. While considerable restoration work was done in the years since, in 2012, it sustained significant hurricane damage and had to begin a more extensive restoration process.

Saturday, February 12th, 2022 marked an important milestone in the ongoing journey of the 1805 Hearse House. Major aspects of the restoration work have been completed and the house has completed its journey from Wales, MA where much of the restoration work was done by restoration expert Tim Wohlhueter from Squaw Hollow Restoration, back home to Berlin where it will be reviewed for any final restoration needs before it can be finally assembled back where it belongs.

Berlin is fortunate to be one of the few towns with a surviving hearse house. Harvard has the nearest other one. Even Old Sturbridge Village lacks a Hearse House. Berlin's Hearse House antedates the Powder House by nine years and is thus the oldest structure still here which was originally built by the Town for public use. When restoration is completed, the Hearse House will stand as a reminder of a time when the Town took an active role in providing the necessary services to its people on the occasion of a death.



*The Hearse House as seen in 1816 at the front of the Old Burying Ground on Linden Street.*

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# Powder House News

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## Center for Living and Working (CLW)

We had the pleasure of meeting with various staff members from the Center for Living and Working (CLW). CLW is based in Worcester and they service the majority of Central Massachusetts. CLW is here to help those diagnosed with various disabilities, gain independence, and help them lead as fulfilling a life as possible. CLW's mission is to empower "persons with disabilities to access the services and supports they seek".

CLW has various programs to help tackle various situations. These programs include personal care management, long term services and supports, deaf and hard of hearing services, youth services (ages 18-24), independent living centers and case management. Youth services helps younger people learn transitional skills to transition to adulthood. Independent living centers help people learn and maintain as much independence as possible. Personal Care management

helps families get the resources needed to keep their loved ones at home. Long term services and supports works with those under 65 that are eligible for OneCare (MassHealth and Medicare) to receive benefits. These services may be most relevant to our Berlin seniors.

To determine if you are eligible, you can call CLW at 508-798-0350 or visit [centerlw.org](http://centerlw.org). CLW has a website, Facebook page and Instagram account for those who are interested. Anyone can self-refer and providers can also make referrals as well. Someone from their information and referral department will call you back to see what services can be of best use depending on each situation. CLW does work with other agencies as well to provide wraparound or continuum of care.

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## Gone But Not Forgotten

- Grace Flint ..... 12/26/21
- James Scott ..... 12/29/21
- Richard Kessler.....1/19/22
- Arthur Lange.....1/21/22
- Harlan Streeter..... 1/25/22
- Susan Jones.....1/27/22
- Andre Pelletier ..... 2/5/22

## True Grit for Seniors

The COA's "True Grit for Seniors" project resulted in the placement of 50 buckets of Berlin Highway Department sand/salt mix at senior residences. We are grateful to Lowe's Home Improvement store and their Highland Commons Operations Manager, Al Briggs, for donating fifty 5 gallon buckets for our use in this project.