



THE

OAKHAM HERALD

Number 3

April 2015

Back Door Café 508-882-5251

Mon, Tues Thurs & Fri 9a.m.-1p.m.

COA Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Senior Center Council on Aging to identify the total needs of the community's Senior Citizens, to link services to those needs and to improve the quality of life of our seniors by providing an active outreach program, providing intergenerational opportunities, opportunities for community involvement, and providing services as needed.

A MOST HEARTY WELCOME TO SPRING – GO OUT AND ENJOY IT WHENEVER POSSIBLE. Take a walk, the best exercise you can practice.

LET'S CELEBRATE THE SEASON!

The COA has been welcoming spring with three events in March – St. Pat's Day on the 17th, the rescheduled Valentine Dinner on the 21st and the monthly birthday on the 24th. AND, there is more to come

WILDLIFE at your WINDOW- IT'S FOR THE BIRDS-

The Massachusetts Audubon Society of Central Mass has created a new outreach program. The Society will sponsor a one hour lively narrated slide presentation exploring bird identification, songs, migration, and behavior patterns of New England birds followed by a question and answer period. They will also teach

us the best techniques to attract the birds to your feeding stations and will set up a feeding station near the drop-in center for our enjoyment. There are over 25 species of birds that use feeders year round in New England to supplement their natural diet.

Everyone is invited to come and participate in this most enjoyable event at the Back Door Café/ Drop-in Center on April 22, 2015 (corresponding to Earth Day) beginning at 10:30 a.m.-11:45a.m.

AND, that is not all. We will be sponsoring a **PIZZA PARTY** immediately following the **Wildlife at your Window** presentation in our dining room. So, come and enjoy the birds and enjoy your favorite pizza with salad and Eskimo pie for dessert. There is no fee for this dual event, but donations will be graciously accepted for Audubon.

Call 508-882-5251 or 508-882-3358 to make your reservation on or before April 21, 2015.



ALSO, WE ARE CELEBRATING OURSELVES AS WELL AS SPRING ON May 6, 2015 at the well-known **PUBLIC HOUSE** in Sturbridge at 11:00 A.M. – 1:30 p.m. with a new program developed by national award winning story teller Katie Green that celebrates the wit, wisdom and wrinkles of life in story and song. You may even feel moved to share an event of your own. Several of you will remember Katie when she presented **Meet Mrs. Rowlandson**, the woman captured by the Indians in the 1600s, at our spring tea a few years ago. We enjoyed her presentation and talent and are happy to be able to sponsor her again. This program is funded in part by the Oakham Cultural Council, a local agency funded by the Mass. Cultural Council, a state agency.

AND, that is not all. Immediately following Katie's presentation we will enjoy a delicious lunch provided by the Public House. The menu will include a salad, your choice of Native Turkey with sausage-cornbread stuffing, gravy and cranberry sauce or pan seared salmon with dill sauce, potato and vegetable, an assortment of their famous rolls and breads, coffee or tea and dessert a la mode. And there is more, each person will also receive a discount coupon that may be used at their wonderful bakery as we leave the restaurant. With all that is included, this is a great deal for only \$10 per person payable at the time of sign up. There is a sign- up sheet at the Café and we have only a few seats left, so call ASAP. We must submit our final tally to the restaurant by April 29.

IT IS SPRING CLEANING TIME, TOO – weed out all those special items that are not used or have simply been put away and almost forgotten. The Council on Aging would be pleased to accept any gently used items no longer wanted as a donation to the annual yard sale. The funds earned help us to continue special events as the two just mentioned that we offer to Oakham's seniors throughout the year. These items may be left at Claudia Lacerte's garage at any time until August 26, 2015. Give her a call at 508-882-5239 to let her know when you will be coming. The COA appreciates your support of this event.

KEEPING NEW ENGLAND PREPARED:

We have received information and suggestions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency that have come about due to the many emergencies that have been experienced by this winter's severe weather throughout the country.

FEMA strongly suggests that all families create a packet of photo copies of all **VITAL RECORDS** for each member of a family. When catastrophes such as fire, floods, mud slides, roof collapses, tornadoes, etc. occur they usually occur very suddenly and include complete destruction of the family home and along with it, important family papers and information as well as medication.

What **FEMA** suggests: photo copy all your vital records and store them in a ziplock bag and place this bag in an inconspicuous place near the exit that you would use for your emergency escape. When people must leave their

homes in an instant, they do not usually think nor do they have time to gather this info before leaving.

What sort of information should be copied? Birth Certificates, family photo with all members living in the house and the pet, marriage certificate, Medicare card, social security card, identification card, list of medications and papers concerning, credit cards, bank books and guardianship/conservatorship. Having access to these papers after an emergency may help to alleviate problems that might occur in the aftermath. Also having a small cash amount of \$200 would be a good idea.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM:

As we mentioned in last month's Herald, the Council on Aging has received a few copies of the Caregiver's Guide of Mass. This info can be borrowed at any time.

There are many caregivers in Oakham who watch over grandchildren, adult parents, grandparents and spouses. This is rewarding work but can also become overwhelming and fatiguing. Anyone who is a caregiver, anyone who has a caregiver or even anyone who anticipates becoming a caregiver is invited to attend this most important program and discussion on **Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 11:a.m. – 11:45 a.m. at our Drop-in Center.** If you know anyone who is performing this most important job, please let him/her know of this meeting. All are welcome and invited to attend no matter his/her age or whether he/she lives in Oakham. We are open to everyone for this presentation.

CAREGIVING AT 60 AND 70 by Jane Glidden and Ellen Cole as seen in the MCOA this month:

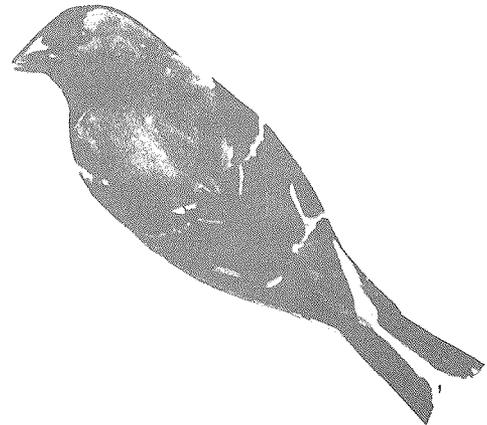
The sandwich generation- those who tend to be between 40 and 50 years old who are sandwiched between aging parents who need help and their own children- have become the Club Sandwich Generation – those in our 50s, 60s, and 70s, sandwiched between our own aging parents, our adult children, and our grandchildren. Many of us have sick spouses or ailing siblings who need our care. Caregiving is often the responsibility of senior women, and it is not out-of-the- question for us to be caring simultaneously for four generations!

When the conversation turned to caregiving in our 60s and 70s Candles groups, Club Sandwich Women had much to say. They found the strength to take on the role of caretaker for spouse, sibling, and other close relatives, sometimes for years. They knew the strain of illness and the grief of death, and they shared their sadness and their pain. Unspoken were the thoughts of one's own demise who would take care of the caregivers, and how would our lives end?

We know women our age who help raise grandchildren while two-career parents are away all day, even a family with several young foster children where their grandmas are there to cover the after-school to dinner period of time. As longevity has increased, many of us still have our elderly parents in our lives. As they age we become their caregivers, even as we continue to emotionally support and nurture our children and grandchildren. (con't. on next page)

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Many of our own parents did not face a similar experience with our grandparents. We hear how some women shift all their attention to the care of elderly parents. Some cease working and take on the task single-handed. One woman, a longtime professional with prestigious credentials retired early and moved alone across the country to live with her ill mother. Virtually all of our participants talked of life-as-usual put on hold when this duty calls. This can be a joy, or an emotionally taxing responsibility, or a combination of both especially if there is slow deterioration of mind and body in the more elderly in our care.

Some women in our groups were nursing ill husbands, not infrequently while also taking care of a parent, or a grown child, or a grandchild, any of whom who might need their care. Although some members of this club sandwich generation (our generation) find their caregiving role to be heartwarming and a source of pride, we learned from other women who sounded quite discouraged and a few relationships with our own spouses moved by necessity from mate and partner to patient and caregiver. (article to be continued in May Herald) (support for these caregivers will be discussed on May 19 at Drop-in Center)