



THE  
**OAKHAM  
HERALD**

January, 2018

Published by the Oakham Council on Aging

**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 for community involvement, and providing services as needed.

**OAKHAM SENIOR/DROP-IN CENTER:**

**NEW HOURS:** Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs,  
10 am-1 pm

**CLOSED:** Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays  
major holidays, school snow days.

**PHONE:** 508-882-5251

**STAFF:** Lucy Tessnau, part-time Director



**COA BOARD MEMBERS:**

**Chair:** Pauline Dwelly

**Vice-Chair:** Rick Hendra

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**Assoc. Members:** Jane Pease  
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**BACK DOOR CAFÉ**

**Coordinator:** Jan Pierce

**Volunteers:** Pauline Dwelly  
Diane Rochette  
Lil Nichols

**NEWSLETTER** Lucy Tessnau  
Rick Hendra

**HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!!**

We've got some new, fun, and interesting things for you to enjoy at the Back Door Café and Drop-in Center in 2018! And not just for seniors: we invite everyone, of all ages, to attend our programs.

A **Guided Autobiography program** will begin in February to help folks put their life's stories on paper. Seema Kenney is a certified Autobiography Consultant who leads participants through priming questions and themes to evoke memories of events long filed away and seemingly forgotten. Participants write a story each week to share with a small group of receptive classmates. A life story emerges. On January 9, Ms. Kenney will give a short introduction to the program so we can gauge interest (see enclosed flyer for further info.)

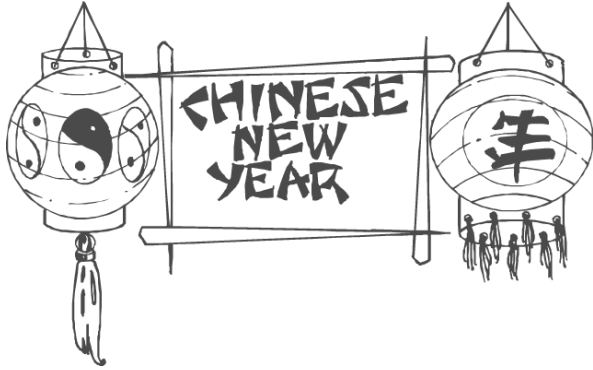
## MORE TO DO...

### Still unwinding? Use a laugh?

Need time to just sit back and relax? When was the last time you really laughed? Laughing relieves stress, and we all need the healing power of laughter more than ever now. So we'd like to give you something to laugh about: on January 30, Trevor Smith, a certified Laughter Leader (yes, there are such things), will be at the Drop-in Center for a program of fun and laughs – “for the health of it”! All ages are invited. Warm cider or hot chocolate will be provided. And IT'S FREE! (See flyer for comical details)

### MEET WITH THE DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF

Deputy Fire Chief Rob Collette has been working and studying hard for the safety of seniors in Oakham. He will be at the drop-in center on January 18 at 10a.m. to discuss home heating safety and to answer questions or concerns you may have. Please join him for life saving information.



### Welcome the Chinese New Year With Food!

On February 9, join us to celebrate the Chinese New Year with lunch at the Empire Buffet Chinese Restaurant in Southbridge. Their food is always fresh, filling and delicious. There's something for everyone and the service is excellent. So don't dine alone – make friends and enjoy some camaraderie.

The cost is only \$5 per person, due at sign up. Make reservations early by calling 508-882-5251 or 882-3358 or sign up at the Back Door on or before Feb. 6. Carpooling is available if you need it. We'll be leaving the Senior Center at 10:45 for our 11:30 reservation.

### Coming in February...

#### HYPNOSIS

Near the end of February, Bob Martel of Holden will present the exciting science of hypnosis used to relieve some chronic pain, help with sleep deprivation and some memory loss. More info will be in the February Herald.

#### Future Events:

#### Self-Defense for Seniors:

Join us on March 27 for an important and educational demonstration of self-defense from Martial Arts master instructor Bill May of the Blue Stone Dojang studio.

**Worcester Bravehearts:** When's the last time you took in a ball game on a warm summer evening? (Sounds good about now, eh?) Worcester's own Bravehearts play baseball starting at 7:05 at Fitton Field at Holy Cross. With enough folks, we can get an all you can eat ballpark dinner – Angus burgers, jumbo hot dogs, chicken or veggie burger sandwiches, pasta or potato salad, and ice cream sundaes (all you can eat, right?) for \$27 per head, including the game and a Bravehearts cap! Let us know at the Senior Center if you might be interested.

### And, As Always...

**Chair exercise classes** – Mondays at 10:30

**Trivial Pursuit** – every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. We welcome all challengers!

**Bingo** – every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday. Prizes will be \$1 for each winning card and a complimentary lunch to the winner of the cover-all.

**Cards** – 2 pm every Sunday afternoon, followed by refreshments

**Jigsaw Puzzling** – every day!

### **Profile of Mr. Robert Hahn:**

It was big doings at the Senior Center back on Nov. 27: Mr. Robert Hahn was being presented the Boston Post Cane, whose tradition is worth noting here:

*“On August 2, 1909, Mr. Edwin A. Grozier, Publisher of the Boston Post, a newspaper, forwarded to the Board of Selectmen in 700 towns\* (no cities included) in New England a gold-headed ebony cane with the request that it be presented with the compliments of the Boston Post to the oldest male citizen of the town, to be used by him as long as he lives (or moves from the town), and at his death handed down to the next oldest citizen of the town. The cane would belong to the town and not the man who received it.” (Boston Post Cane Info Center)*

Mr. Hahn was 101 on Nov. 1, and we had a fine turnout to celebrate it including all the Selectmen, who made the presentation and proclamation. This was the original cane, which had been thought lost, and the Selectmen took it back with them, leaving the replica with Mr. Hahn. (I call him “Mr. Hahn” because a centenarian deserves that respect from us mere sexagenarians)(look it up!) So I was thinking I’d like to do a profile of him, but how do you compress a life of a hundred years into a 5 paragraph nutshell?

As we ate and I pondered, Mr. Hahn quietly entwined a spoon in the tines of a fork and stuck a wooden match through the ensemble before balancing it all on the side of a glass. “What do you think will happen if I burn that

match?” he asked. I said the silverware would fall to the table. He asked if I wanted to bet \$10? I may not have his advantage of years, but I’m too old to fall for that one, and said I better not. After a comically futile search for a scratchpad for his match, a lighter was found – and sure enough, the match burned down to the edge of the glass and stayed there. “The center of gravity is right there on the edge”, he said, by way of explanation.

While I pondered that, Mr. Hahn pulled out a \$50 bill and told us that the guy pictured there (US Grant) was his grandfather’s cousin. His (delightful) daughter Barbara (up all the way from Delaware for the event!) explained that their forebear was a Simpson, which of course was Grant’s middle name for a reason.

As I was absorbing all this, Mr. Hahn pulled out his camera and showed us a picture of his horse, Storm. He got her from Bay State Equine Rescue, as he has several before, and though he doesn’t ride any more he’s restored that horse to health and contentment and they’ve become fast friends. A man and his horse. It’s a beautiful thing.

All in all, it was a delightful time with delightful company all ‘round, and though I didn’t find out all that much about Mr. Hahn’s history, I came away with a true appreciation for this thoroughly entertaining and kindly old gent. As he left, Mr. Hahn waived his new old walking stick and promised “to raise cane” at his birthday party, to which we were all invited.

When I grow up as an oldster, I only hope to be half as much fun as Mr. Hahn!

Oakham Council on Aging  
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Oakham, MA 01068

The printing of this newsletter is partially funded by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

**THANK YOU-** to those who so kindly and generously volunteered some of their time to personalize Christmas cards for Oakham residents now living in healthcare facilities or who have had to move out of town. The cards were done beautifully and with caring thoughts by Pat Ide, Malcolm Ide, Cindy Currier, Kevin Currier, Rick Hendra, Pauline Dwelly, Joan Kimball, Barbara Bechan, Irene Berube, Priscilla McGlynn, Pam Kelley and Lucy Tessnau.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY-** We are closed if the Quabbin Regional School District is closed.

#### **S.A.F.E.Senior**

The Oakham Fire Department is offering Senior Home Inspections. They can check your smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and advise you on safety issues. To sign up for this service, please contact the Senior Center

#### **IN SYMPATHY**

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Gail Truedson on November 19, 2017. Gail was a very caring person whose family was the center of her life. Gail worked for many years as a waitress in area restaurants. She was a professional, friendly and efficient waitress and always had time to chat with her customers. She also became a home health care aide serving elderly patients and helping them to remain in their homes. Gail loved and cared for animals as well. She leaves her husband of 40 years, David, and three children and four grandchildren. We extend our most sincere sympathies to her family and friends.

#### **EXERCISE PROGRAM NOTES**

Gordon Elliott, our exercise leader, broke the femur of his right leg while at work at Walmart in October. He is progressing nicely and feels that he will return to clas the second Monday in January. He wishes to thank everyone for the cards and well wishes he received. We continue to send him our Best Wishes for a speedy and complete recovery.

