



THE OAKHAM HERALD

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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:

HOURS: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri **9a.m.-1p.m.**

CLOSED: Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays
And major Holidays

PHONE: 508-882-5251

STAFF: Lucy Tessnau, part-time, interim
Director

COA BOARD MEMBERS:

Chair: Pauline Dwelly

Vice-Chair: Rick Hendra

Members Steve Ober
Priscilla McGlynn

Alt. Members Tammy Gehring
Meg Goodrow

Assoc. Members: Jane Pease
Jan Pierce
Joan Kimball

BACK DOOR CAFÉ

Coordinator: Jan Pierce

Volunteers: Pauline Dwelly
Diane Rochette
Lil Nichols

November at the Back Door:

It's back-to-daylight-savings this month with red letter days to express gratitude for our homes, friends and families – a time for remembrance and Thanksgiving. Lest we forget: be sure to include all of our veterans and military men and women in your thoughts.

Our focus event this month is our annual, much anticipated **Pre-Thanksgiving Lunch at Charlie's** on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$5 per person. Anyone needing a ride should call Lucy at 508-882-5251 or 508-882-3358. Otherwise, meet us at the restaurant. As of this printing, anyone who still wishes to go will be placed on a wait list since our seats are now filled. And for good reason: they always put on a great spread for us – and the price is right!



More Good Things to Do in November:

Chair exercise classes – Mondays at 10:30

Trivial Pursuit – every 1st and 3rd **Friday** of the month. We welcome all challengers!

Bingo – every 1st and 3rd 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!

November Closings: the Senior Center and Backdoor Café will be closed on November 10 because Elder Services is closed and no meals will be prepared. Also: we will be closed for Thanksgiving and the day after.

October's Cruise on Lake Webster:

On the fifth of the month – an absolutely gorgeous day – almost two dozen of us from Oakham joined with more than a dozen of our counterparts from Hubbardston for a lovely cruise on Lake Webster, better known as Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagogg-chaubunagungamaugg – a name which only Howard Bechan could roll off his tongue like a native. From the paddleboat, we saw eagles flying over million dollar houses and nests atop the pines. So peaceful!

From there we went to a fine lunch at Breezy Point, and finished up with a stop at Brookfield Orchards for a complementary cider and donut. On the bus ride home, the Hubbardston folks – including several from their "Swingin', Singin' Seniors" choral group – led us in song, from "Yankee Doodle" to "Amazing Grace" – everything but "One Hundred Bottles of Beer on the Wall", for which we were grateful! It was really a joy.

MEDICARE Enrollment deadline is here. Do not ignore Medicare and your Insurance plan's mail. It is that time of year again. If you have a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO or PPO), you should be receiving information from you plan. You will have a chance to change your plan for next year (2018). SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) counselors can help you understand your plan's changes and other available options. Call 1-800-243-4636 then press 3 to get to a counselor. Enrollment started October 5 and will end on December 7. (See flyer)

Guess What: Medicare is not calling about your back brace. Scammers call and offer you a back brace through Medicare or they claim that a friend or caregiver has recommended you for receiving a back brace. If you show interest in the brace, the Scammer starts asking for personal information. Don't fall for these phony claims. Medicare already has your information. **And: PLEASE, Be Aware** – everyone will be receiving new Medicare Cards between April, 2018 and April 2019. These new cards will no longer use your Social Security Numbers. This will help to keep your personal information more secure. SO, **DON'T GET CAUGHT BY THE SCAMMERS WHO WILL UNDOUBTEDLY USE THIS TIME TO CATCH YOU!!!** Be on your guard: NO ONE will be contacting you about your new Medicare Card. NEVER answer any questions about your Social Security Number or Medicare Card. (see enclosed flyer).

* * *

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

Happy Birthday Bob Hahn! On November 1, Robert Hahn celebrated his 101st birthday. With the sad passing recently of Dot Urbanovich (see below), Bob is now the oldest resident of the Town of Oakham. He visited us at the Backdoor Café a little while back and showed us photos of his horses, which he still takes care of. Our congratulations to you, Bob – and best wishes for many more!

Celebrating a November birthday?

We would like to celebrate it with you. We hope you will give us the opportunity. Look at the menu enclosed and choose a day that is good for you with a lunch you would like to share with us. Then call Jan at 508-882-5251 at least 48 hrs. in advance to make your reservation(s). Feel free to bring a friend or relative with you. We wish all of you having a November Birthday a wonderful day with family and friends.

Come One, Come All! Couldn't make it to Charlie's for our pre-Thanksgiving lunch? The Back Door Cafe will be serving a delicious **holiday meal on Tuesday, November 21**. The menu will include roast turkey with gravy, stuffing, mashed potatoes, butternut squash, and cranberry sauce - with pumpkin mousse for desert. Hope you can join us for this Thanksgiving gathering. We would like to wish everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving in person.

Just a thought: We are entertaining the idea of changing the hours of the Senior Center and the Back Door Café Help us in the New Year. We are considering being open Mon, Tues, Wed and Thurs 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and closed on Friday. These would also be the days for the Back Door Café lunches, if approved by Elder Services. What do you think? Let us know.

In Sympathy: Oakham's oldest resident and holder of the Boston Post Cane, **Helen "Dot" Urbanovitch** of Barre Rd., passed away peacefully at home Tuesday, October 10, 2017. Dot was very active with the Council on Aging serving as secretary for many years. She and her late husband Pete owned the Oxbow Restaurant in Rutland for many years. She was an avid reader, knitter, crocheter and an enthusiastic bird watcher. Dot would have been 102 on her next birthday, October 25, 2017. Dot was very fortunate to have such a large and caring family who were able to ensure that she could remain in her home and well cared for until her death. We extend our sympathies to her entire family.

We were also saddened to learn of the death of **Walter Grimes**, brother of our friend Eva Grimes. Our sincere condolences go to Eva and her entire family, and friends.

Help us if you can: So that none may be forgotten, if you aware of any one who is alone, homebound, ill or who has experienced a loss in the family, please let us know so that we might respond appropriately. Thank you.

November Profile: Werner Tessnau

by Rick Hendra

When I first came to my birthday lunch at the Backdoor Café some years back, I was a bit shy. I didn't recognize many faces. I knew Lucy and I'd met her husband, Werner, but not to know him. Still, that was enough to sit across from him that day and we struck up a conversation. I asked him if he pronounced the W in his name as Germans do, as a "v" – as in "Verner". He said no, but seeing I knew some German, he told me was born in Germany, in what was known as East Prussia, now part of Poland. He was pleased that I knew of it. Yes, he spoke German and some Russian too...
(Continued on back page)

OAKHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

2 COLDBROOK RD. #6

OAKHAM, MA 01068

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Werner (continued from page 3):

And so began my first friendship at the Senior Center. Werner recounted fleeing his childhood home with his mother and grandparents back in 1945, when he was just 3 years old. They knew that the Soviets would show no mercy. There was a close call boarding the train, but after some time Werner found himself in Lithuania, from where he eventually made his way to Germany, then in ruins. Ten years later he arrived in Massachusetts. It was a harrowing story, though with a happy end.

When he was still a young man, working at the Union Public Meat Market, he got to know another young fellow there named Bob Pierce. Their lives took them on different paths and they lost track of each other. Many years later, when Jan Pierce was offered the job as site coordinator of the meals program in Oakham, she met Lucy and told Bob about her. Her last name, Tessnau, rang a bell with Bob and he asked Jan if Lucy's husband's name was Werner... Fate had crossed their orbits again after more than 48 years. It was an omen, Jan thought. She took the position and Bob often rejoins Werner and us at lunch.

In those intervening years, Werner had worked as a draftsman and then was owner of The Outdoorsman Sporting Goods store in W. Boylston retiring in 2003. After that, he happily served as Lucy's right hand in all the work she does for Oakham – as constable, as coordinator of the Senior Center, and as a key member of several Town committees, Werner's most always by her side. A gentle man, friendly, and warm, Werner makes everyone feel welcome. And so I slowly became more of a regular myself at the Backdoor Café.

Which is why it was such a blow to us all when Werner suffered a stroke with memory loss sometime back in 2014 or so. He's still the gentle, peaceable, polite man he's always been, but he's lost the gift of gab. He answers briefly, and doesn't initiate. He watches TV and observes. I'm always thinking he knows more than he lets on. We miss his stories and humor, but we're always glad to see him when he makes it to the Café. We see him less, as he's busily at work on his rehab now, regaining some of the mobility he lost and his speech, too. He's doing well, for which we're all very thankful. Hang in there, Werner! We'll see you soon.