



*The Senior Center is open
Wed - Fri 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*EMAIL: flaseniors.flamass@gmail.com
PHONE: 662-2448 extension 4*

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TOWN OFFICE PHONE NUMBER: 662-2448

To reach a specific office press

- 0 - Town Administrator (Joan Lewis)*
- 1 - Treasurer - (Stacey Abuisi)
Tax Collector - (Stephanie Pare)*
- 2 - Assessor's Office (Krista Bishop)*
- 3 - Town Clerk (Lisa Brown)*
- 4 - Senior Center (Sue Oleson &
Joyce VonTilborg)*
- 5 - Town Garage (Jim White)*
- 6 - Fire Department (Mike Gleason)*

*BOARD of HEALTH - 662-2448
FLORIDA LIBRARY - 664-0153
TOWN ACCOUNTANT - 662-2448
(Melanie Medon)*

This newsletter is made possible by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs
and support from the Town of Florida.

**** When the school is closed due to inclement weather, so is the Florida Senior Center.**

Welcome to the Florida Senior & Community Center

January Birthdays: Our friendly card writer is no longer able to do it so for now we will be sending Birthday Wishes through the newsletter so here goes...We consider all the sparkle in the snow, in the trees and in the sky as your Birthday candles. So many candles for all of you who celebrate your Birthday. We wish you the best of Birthdays and many more from all your friends at the Senior Center.

What's new with Verizon? They have decided they want us to go back to calling them directly with complaints about landline phone service or lack thereof. So let's see how that goes 1-800-837-4966. It's toll free so make those calls. Keep me posted as to how it goes.

DON'T FALL FOR IT: Check your credit card bills closely Christmas bills are the perfect storm conartists to steal from you.

CENTER NEWS: Heads Up!! The Center will be closed on Thursdays January and February and will resume in March. We will still be having yoga Thursday nights though. Here we are undecorating (is that even a word...well now it is), yes, we're undecorating and getting back to normal. Join us for a Yankee Swap on Jan. 8th, a cup of coffee and undecorating on the 15th, Talk of the Town and coffee on the 22nd and a Shepards Pie lunch on the 29th. Of course, there is exercise and Bingo on Fridays, as well as, a Blood Pressure Clinic.

What's up here? At my house we're not undecorating and as a matter of fact I'm putting up more seasonal decorations like snowflakes! That's where I am at and that's where I'll leave it.

How many words can you make out of the word? Snow Squalls

Word Power: Smyster is smiling to yourself while you daydream.

New Word... Axwaddler and it means....

Trivia Everyone Never Needed to Know: It can take up to 10 hours for a snowflake to drop from the clouds to the ground.

A glass ball when dropped will bounce higher than a rubber ball! (Of course, it'll take longer to pick it up).

Venus is the only planet to rotate clockwise.

Health Fact: Move, move, move. I know you've heard you need to keep moving but did you know that moving your spine feeds your brain?! That's right so just sit in your chair and do the twist!

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Man Tip: If the power goes out and you want to get more light in a room , keep a cheap headlight on hand and a galloon jug of water. Turn the light on and strap the headlight on it with light facing into jug. Turn light on and it will eliminate the room.

In the Kitchen: Need to cut a hotdog into slices...use an egg slicer!

Household Tip: After you flush the toilet when the back tank is half full add a ½ c of baking soda to it. When you flush it will help clean the toilet and eliminate odors.

How about a Recipe: Crockpot Hawaiian Chicken: drop cubed boneless chicken, 1 c pineapple juice, ½ c brown sugar or brown sugar substitute, 1/3 c soy sauce or coconut aminos into a crockpot. Stir well, cook on low 6-8 hours. Serve on rice or with oriental veggies.

Black Bean Soup: 3 c of dried black beans that have been soaked. In fry pan saute 1 med. Diced onion, 1 diced red pepper and 4 cloves minced garlic. Dump all into crockpot with 8 cups vegetable broth cook on low for 8 hours or high for 4 hours. Serve with cilantro and a squirt of lime juice both are optional.

Dessert: Microwave Pumpkin Custard: In a small bowl mix ½ c pumpkin puree, 1 egg, ½ tsp vanilla and pumpkin pie spice with 1 packet sugar substitute, brown sugar or maple syrup. Mix well, pour into greased mug and microwave for 2 and ½ to 3 minutes.

LET'S LAUGH (OR AT LEAST SMIRK): There are several tips I'd like to share with you as we enter the New Year. 1. If you lick the frosting off a cupcake it becomes a muffin and they're healthy, 2. You can eliminate a lot of telemarketer calls by answering the phone "Sheriff's Department Fraud Division", 3. If you neglect taking down the cob webs in your house you get your week of cardio exercise out of the way when you walk into them. Well, don't want to give you too much information so that's all for now. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

LET US END ON THIS NOTE... Remember to smile always, laugh often and take time to show people that you appreciate them. That's what makes you special.

Remember if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for The Senior Center feel free to contact one of the Council on Aging Members: Mae Embry – Priscilla Brayman – Ruth Boyce –

Sarah Maclennan - Patricia Tovani – Lisa Brown – Wanda McNary – Debra Welch – Sue Fulton -

Director: Suzan Oleson - Assistant Director: Joyce Van Tilborg

THANK YOU FRAN for your assistance with the Newsletter.

Senior News

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM IMPERSONALIZATION SCAMS:

Scammers posing as various organizations (like Amazon) may send you a text, email or phone you try to deceive you to provide personal information.

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR? *Scammers may tell you there is a fraud investigation or claim there is unauthorized or fraudulent activity on your account and you must “verify” your bank or credit card account by providing the account number, password and other private information.*

HOW CAN YOU AVOID BEING SCAMMED? *Call the account supposedly trying to verify your personal information and confirm whether they are calling you. If they are not making a call, report the fraudulent call to the banking institution or the issuer of your credit card.. Then go to their website and change your password and any other login information you use to login to your account.*

NEVER GIVE OUT BANK ACCOUNT NUMBERS, YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR EVEN YOUR BIRTHDATE, HOME ADDRESS OR AGE OVER THE PHONE. THAT'S PERSONAL INFORMATION!

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DON'T GET LEFT OUT IN THE COLD! *If you haven't given much thought to how you're going to pay your heating bills all the way through next spring it's not too late to apply for fuel assistance.*

BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL (BCAC) administers the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program known commonly as Fuel Assistance. This program helps low income people pay for part of the cost of their primary source of heat from November 1st through April 30th.

The income guidelines for the 2025 season are: \$49,196 for a 1 person household; \$64,333 for a 2 person household. If you fall in the guideline you can contact **BCAC** online through their customer portal at : <https://toapply.org/BCAC> or call **BCAC** at their main office (413-445-4503), toll free (1-866-216-6200) or their North Adams office (663-3014).

The **Salvation Army** administers the Good Neighbor Energy Fund. The fund helps qualified Massachusetts residents pay electric, gas, or oil bills when, due to temporary financial difficulty they can't meet their energy bills and aren't eligible for state or federal assistance. The income guidelines: \$49,197- \$65,594 (1 person household;) \$64,334 - \$85,777 (2 person household.)

Those who qualify may receive up to \$500 per household per heating season. For more information and to apply call: **Pittsfield Corps (413-442-0624)** or **North Adams Corps (663-7987)**.

VETERAN' SERVICES has a state program known as Chapter 115 benefits that provides cash and medical assistance to low income Massachusetts wartime Veterans and their families who are in need of immediate help, including help with fuel. Call **VETERAN'S SERVICES (662-3040)** for North County.

The Heating System Repair or Replacement Program provides emergency repair and replacement services to low income households. The program is administered by **BCAC. (663-3014)** Eligible applicants are those that are eligible for the fuel assistance program.

Just a reminder: Massachusetts law prevent utility companies from shutting off services to senior households; low income families with infants or people with serious illnesses who cannot afford to pay their utility bills.

BEWARE of scammers who threaten immediate termination of services. That is not the usual procedure for regulated utility companies (electric or gas).

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THE BERKSHIRE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY has a new pilot service; Medical Transportation for Seniors 60+ and FLORIDA is on the list of towns served. Operating hours are Monday-Saturday 7a.m. - 6 p.m. Pricing starts at \$7.50. If you need transportation to a medical appointment, additional information or an application to use the service contact the BRTA at (info@berkshireta.com) or call them (413-499-2782). This is the first time Florida is included in any BRTA.

SEND A CARD: Take time out of your busy day to send a card to one of our most senior town members: *Mae Embry* who is presently at North Adams Commons, 175 Frankiin St., North Adams; Room 219B. The holiday is a loney time to be away from home. Brighten her day with a card.

WANT TO SAVE MONEY? The Cosmetology Department at McCann Technical School is offering appointments from Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Save on haircuts, perms, color, manicures, pedicures. Other services are also offered. Hairstyling (shampoo, cut, blowdry) start at \$7.00 for short hair; perms \$18.00 and up and color at \$22.00. Manicure pricing begins at \$8.50.

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*Still having problems with your **Verizon** phone service? **Verizon** has a phone service called "**VOICE CONNECT**", It offers **CALLER ID; CALL FORWARDING; 3-WAY CALLING; CALL WAITING; CALLER ID BLOCKING AND INTERNATIONAL CALLING** for a monthly fee of \$30.00 plus a few dollars more for taxes. The service works like a cell phone, it's not connected to Verizon outside lines. It has battery backup. In case of a power failure you will still have landline service. Call Verizon (1-800-837-4966) ask for technical support and then ask for information on the "**VOICE CONNECT**" service. We've had it since September with no issues.*

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JANUARY AT THE FLORIDA LIBRARY: All programs are offered on Thursdays (unless otherwise specified) from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. You must register for all programs. (664-0153) or director@floridafreelibrary.com

January 2: DIY BIRDFEEDERS: Design and make your own birdfeeder.

January 9: A literary discussion with Michael Ponsor, New YorkTimes best selling author of "The Hanging Judge, Point of Order and The One Eyed Judge".

January 23: It's Trivia Night at the library. Come join the competition with prizes.

January 30: BIRDWATCHING: GOOD FOR YOU AND GOOD FOR SCIENCE Professor Daniel Shustack will present a program on how to become a birdwatcher. This talk will cover tips on bird identification, observing bird species, and tools to make you a better bird watcher. Who knows, we may start a bird watching club here in Florida.

COMING UP: February 6: Learn the basics of sourdough bread making.

The Florida Free Library will not be open Jan. 20, Martin Luther King Day.

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JANUARY 2025 (1)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 HAPPY NEW YEAR CLOSED	2 THIS	WEEK	4
6	8	7	8 9:00 ADMIN 11:00 Chair Yoga 11:30 YANKEE SWAP (2)	9 6:30 Evening Yoga with Lisa	10 11:00 Gentle Movement 12:00 BINGO	11
12	13	14	15 9:00 ADMIN 11:00 Chair Yoga 11:30 We'll put away the Christmas decorations and have a cup of coffee while we work.	16 6:30 Evening Yoga with Lisa	17 11:00 Gentle Movement 12:00 BINGO	18
19	20	21	22 9:00 ADMIN 11:00 Chair Yoga 11:30 Talk of the Town. Come and reminisce. Refreshment will be served.	23 6:30 Evening Yoga with Lisa	24 11:00 Gentle Movement BROWN BAGS 12:00 BINGO	25
26	27	28	29 9:00 ADMIN 11:00 Chair Yoga 11:30 Come for lunch, we're making Shepards Pie	30 6:30 Evening Yoga with Lisa	31 11:00 Gentle Movement 12:00 BINGO	

NOTE: (1) During January and February, the Center will be closed on Thursdays, there will be Evening Yoga with Lisa. We will resume our regular three-day programming in March 2025

(2) Yankee Swap – bring a small gift you want to recycle or buy a small one no more than 7 to 10 dollars