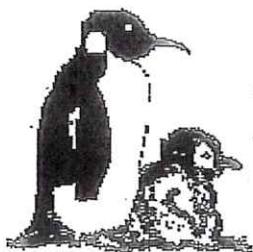


BITS & PIECES



FROM FRAN

**February & March 2024**

**Blood Pressure Screening:**

We are pleased to announce that Uncas Mobile Health Team will be attending the Preston Senior Center on a monthly basis beginning on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. The team offers preventative health care such as blood pressure screenings, and information about other health services provided by Uncas Health District. All are welcome to participate in this free service. This addition to the existing Monday Café Program and the Cribbage players schedule will not interfere with those events. Come to the senior center, participate in one, two or all three events.

**Preston Senior Affairs Committee:**

The Preston Senior Affairs Committee would like to announce the appointment of Debra Eddy as its newest member. Debra will join with Committee members Chairman Morris Fishbone, Elizabeth Bassette, Marie Perrin and Fran Minor to complete their term of office thru December 31, 2024. Meetings are conducted on the first Tuesday of the month, with the exception of July and August. (we're on recess during that time) For the convenience of the community, meetings are conducted in person at the Preston Senior Center, 42 Long Society Road and via teleconference. Meeting notices are posted on the Town of Preston website and are open to the public.

### **AARP Tax-Aide Appointments:**

The schedule of available time slots is quickly filling up for the free income tax assistance program. Some slots are available on February 14, two slots are open on February 28<sup>th</sup>, three on March 13<sup>th</sup> and several openings remain on March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. The program is open to residents and non-residents alike. For additional information or to schedule your appointment, please contact the Senior Affairs Office at 860-887-5581 ext. 6. The AARP Tax-Aide appointments are held at the Preston Senior Center, 42 Long Society Road, Preston.

### **Food Distribution:**

A lot of things have happened in the past few weeks to put a huge crimp on our plans for conducting a food distribution during the months of February and March. That last storm created a huge mess for Norwich and surrounding areas, including the United Community & Family Services facility. When the Yantic River overflowed its banks, it traveled across the street to the UCFS building lower level where all of the food was stored! You can just imagine the devastation as the entire lower level needs to be torn out. Consequently, we will not be conducting food distributions during the month of February and probably the month of March. We will keep you posted as to the progress being made, fingers crossed and hopefully we can resume the program in April.

As an option for participants of our food distribution I would like to remind you of the Preston City Congregational Church Food Pantry. They distribute food on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and noon. The Preston City Congregational Church is located at 321 Route 164, Preston. All are welcome to participate.

### **Congregate Meal Program:**

Our TVCCA Café Program for the month of February will include the following menu selections:

Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>: Sloppy Joe w/Bun, Tater Tots, Snap Peas, Sweet Treat.  
Grape Juice and Beverage.

Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. Beef Stroganoff, Penne Pasta, Broccoli, Diced Pears, Bread, Margarine and Beverage

Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup>: Program Closed in celebration of President's Day

Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>: Country Fried Beef Steak, Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes, Corn w/Peppers & Onions, Fresh Fruit, Bread, Margarine and Beverage.

Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. and registrations are necessary to participate in the meal. There is a suggested donation request of \$3.00 per person for individuals 60 years of age and older. Persons under the age of 60 years are welcome to attend but will be charged a fee to participate. Please make your luncheon reservations a minimum of one week in advance of the date you plan on attending. You can contact the Senior Affairs Office at 860-887-5581 ext. 6 or the Preston Senior Center at 860-889-0770 to make your reservation. We look forward to seeing you soon.

**My Favorite Sayings:**

Sowing kindness is life's best investment

The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way we use them.

A diplomat is someone who thinks twice before saying nothing.

Overlook the faults of others and overcome your own.

Cheerfulness is the atmosphere in which all things thrive.

At night, think of 10 good things that have happened during the day.

If money is your hope for independence you will never have it. The only real security that a man can have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience and ability. ....Henry Ford

It takes seventy muscles to frown, but only thirteen to smile.

The only place where success comes before work is a dictionary.

Time is what we want most, but what, alas, we use worst.

## **An Update on ClearGov and the Budget Process**

### **By Sandra Allyn-Gauthier**

The budget process has begun for Fiscal year 24-25 and the implementation of ClearGov has been instituted. ClearGov is a budget and communication tool that has been discussed over the past year at various meetings, and a prior Pipeline article. The highlights of ClearGov are as follows:

ClearGov will capture and use information from the various budgets that will consist of:

- A Service Narrative-what each department/board does, its mission
- Fiscal Year 2023 Major Service Level Accomplishments-any projects, programs, events, grants, major purchases made
- Fiscal Year 2024 Major Service Level Goals-new programs, initiatives, improvements, expansions, partnerships
- Additional Budget Information-highlights of the budget request, business justification, and need of the various line items

As we continue to enhance our use of ClearGov, these areas will include data and specific measures of continuous improvement and success to aid in the budget development and communication process. This will tell what each department and board did and intends to do with the funds that are appropriated to them. Five years of historical data were also imported into ClearGov. Instead of using multiple software products, such as Word, Excel, and the financial system, all the information will be contained in ClearGov. We plan to build this digital resource by continually adding information about our community for greater communication to our citizens.

I am happy to report we will be using Clear Gov in this year's fiscal cycle to build the budget, and last year's digital budget book will be launched to the public by February. Demonstrations were provided to the BOE, BOS, and BOF at their meetings in January. As noted, enhancements and data will continue to be built as we move forward but we are excited to be at this starting place. Many thanks to

Cindy Varricchio, Kim Lang, and the staff who helped compile five years of historical data and other information to make this happen!

#### Uncas Health News:

Flu Update: 269 influenza cases have been identified in the 11 cities and towns of the Uncas Health District this flu season, according to January 13, 2024, data from the Connecticut Department of Health. This week's reported numbers mark a sharp increase in cases from the reporting period ending January 6, 2024.

A majority of reported cases were among those aged 18 -49 and 5 – 17.

It is important to note that influenza cases are only reported if there is a hospitalization or if the positive test comes from a provider.

The colder months bring an increased risk of influenza, but getting vaccinated now can safeguard your health. The flu vaccine is essential for protecting individuals from potentially severe complications, especially for high-risk groups like:

- \*people 65 and older
- \*Individuals with chronic health conditions (heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, asthma)
- \*Pregnant women
- \*Children under 5
- \*Those caring for or living with high-risk individuals.

Flu vaccines are safe, effective, and proven to prevent millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and thousands of deaths annually.

If you haven't already, prioritize getting vaccinated, especially if you fall into a high-risk group. It's not too late to protect yourself or others from the flu's impact. Vaccination is a proactive step towards a healthier community. Choose prevention and navigate the winter with greater resilience. Lets work together to minimize the flu's impact this season.