

## **REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON AGING**

### **About the Council**

The Wellesley Council on Aging, founded in 1972, is a Town Department that serves residents 60 years or older and their families. The Council on Aging is funded through local taxes, state and federal grants, and private contributions. The Council on Aging is composed of a twelve-member volunteer Board of Directors appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Council on Aging board members for 2005-2006 were: Joellen Toussaint (Chair), Janet Beyer (Vice Chair), William Blount (Treasurer), Lorraine Tolman (Secretary), Linda Cohen, Stanley G. Hodges, Felix Juliani, Sr. Alice McCourt, Kathleen Quirk, Dianne Sullivan, Eleanor Sullivan. The 2004-2005 Board also included one Associate Members –John Schuler.

The Council's professional staff consists of a full-time Director of Senior Services, a full-time Health and Social Services Administrator (Outreach Worker), and a part-time Senior Activities Coordinator. In addition, many volunteers assist with activities, lead programs, and participate as class instructors. The Council on Aging started a new volunteer receptionist program that includes 10 volunteers who each cover a half-day of reception. The Council also has several volunteer instructors and group leaders.

### **Council Services**

Council services include subsidized transportation, a bi-monthly newsletter, financial assistance through the Simons Fund, participation in the AARP Tax Counseling Program for Elders, SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) health benefits counseling, and the South Middlesex Opportunity Council Fuel Assistance program. The Council on Aging also provides information and referral; outreach services; in-home assessments; Senior Room Activities; weekday lunches (sponsored and managed by Springwell, Inc.); exercise programs; educational and recreational programs; social and cultural activities; day trips; and intergenerational programs. We are also a site for Wellesley residents age 18 and over to apply for limited financial assistance through the Salvation Army Voucher Program.

### **Programs July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006**

Several long-standing groups meet at the Council on Aging: weekly needlepoint, weekly Bridge, weekly Investment Club, bi-weekly book discussion group, monthly meeting of the Wellesley Retirees, quarterly Triad meeting (partnership with seniors, law enforcement, and the Council on Aging to address safety issues for seniors), Community Service Bears (who meet weekly to make teddy bears for needy children), monthly BINGO, weekly Walking Group, Potpourri, weekly movies, monthly travel videos, and free individual computer tutoring.

Some day trips of note were: Martha's Vineyard, Peabody Essex Museum, MFA Art in Bllom, Boston Holly Trolley and Holiday Lights Tour, Fall Foliage Trip, and Tanglewood Summer Concert.

Exercise classes offered in Fiscal Year 2005 were: Walking Group (once per week), Yoga (once per week), Balance and Flexibility (twice per week), Line Dancing (once per week), Tai Chi (in conjunction with and held at the Recreation Department), and Strength Training and Fall Prevention (through a federal Title III Grant from Springwell, Inc.).

Classes offered were: Computer Instruction, Opera Appreciation; Fine Arts; Creative Writing, Spanish Language Class, Quilting, Beginners' Bridge; Weight Watchers.

The Council on Aging held two intergenerational programs with Mass Bay community College: an Oral History Project and a Book discussion Day and "Meet the Author" at the college. Intergenerational programs were also held with several scout troops and two elementary school groups. The Council on Aging had an intergenerational pancake breakfast in June for the Middle School Community Service Day. The students set-up, served, socialized with the seniors, and cleaned up at the end.

There were also several lectures and health screenings such as: Medicare Part D Seminars; Non-Prescription Remedies for Pain; Arthritis Education; Prescription Drug Program Seminar; Reverse Mortgages; MBTA Senior Pass Program and TAP ID; Financial Planning; Estate Planning; Food Safety for Seniors; Alzheimer's Informational Seminar; Meditation; Holistic Medicine; Glaucoma Screening; and Advanced Care/ Hospice.