

MINUTEMAN VOLUNTEER SERVICES NEWS NOTES

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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Volunteer Services Program Winter Meeting Introducing----*A Matter of Balance* Training! February 10, 12-1:30 pm at our Burlington Office!

Bring a brown bag lunch: We provide beverage and dessert

Is your senior friend worried about falling, or has fallen, but has stopped activities due to concerns about falls? Does he/she want to improve strength/balance?

Learn more about this award winning, national program, which is proven to reduce falls and increase activity levels.

THE NUMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the Class of 2010 Commonwealth Corps volunteers to Minuteman! Cia Boynton has joined me in the Volunteer Services Department as Program Assistant. She was a wonderful help in scheduling drivers and sorters for the Holiday Giving Tree!

We now have 15 medical transport drivers! Thank you to Helen Easton, Ann Carey and Lori Yutzy for helping seniors with this wonderful service. Bob Carleo @ 781.221.7075 continues to schedule rides two days a week with great charm and cheer!

LEXINGTON/WOBURN AREA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES GROCERY SHOPPERS AND VISITORS

Due to the loss of State revenue, we have many seniors on a wait list for services. One way to help them in the meantime is through volunteer shopping/visiting help in the home.

We are turning to you, our loyal volunteers to help with shopping or a weekly visit. If you are willing to step up to help on a temporary basis, or know someone who might be willing to help shop or visit a senior, PLEASE call! We have 12 requests on file, and expect more to come in the New Year! 781.221.7023

VOLUNTEER COACHES NEEDED FOR A *MATTER OF BALANCE* TRAINING! (SIGN UP BY FEBRUARY 18)

FEBRUARY 23 AND MARCH 4, 1-5 PM AT OUR BURLINGTON HEADQUARTERS

We are partnering with Lahey Clinic to train volunteer caregivers, money managers, or anyone who is willing to work directly with seniors. This award winning, evidence-based national program builds on our successful Healthy Connections home hazards project developed with 20 volunteers and their senior friends last winter and spring.

Matter of Balance Coaches help seniors become more confident about managing falls, help to identify ways to reduce falls, and lead simple exercises to help increase strength and balance. **PLUS you will earn A *Matter of Balance* Certification!**

If you have good communication skills, are enthusiastic, dependable, physically able to lead low to moderate exercises, and willing to help your senior friends reduce their risk of fall then SIGN UP NOW! Call Peg Mikkola, 781.221.7018/ p.mikkola@minutemansenior.org

LEARN MORE AT THE INTRODUCTORY MEETING ON FEBRUARY 10, 12 NOON

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteer Caregivers shop for groceries, take seniors shopping and for personal care errands; visit seniors with time for a chat on current news or escort seniors to critical medical appointments.

Office helpers make a critical difference to agency efficiency and operations in collating, phoning, filing and managing phones at the front desk.

HANDYPERSON NEEDED

Our resident handy person retired!

If you like to "hit the nail on the head", you can help out by making simple repairs around the office. Nothing more is needed than a few basic tools and basic "fix-it" skills; **no plumbing or electrical**, and the willingness to offer a couple of hours every other month.

Recent fix-it projects include hanging bulletin boards, installing a keyboard tray, and fixing a broken wheel on a chair. Call 781-221-7009 for details.

Monthly Reports are needed by the first of the month: d.barr@minutemansenior.org or mail! Questions?? Call 781.221.7023

Minuteman Senior Services Flu Prevention Policy

- Get a flu vaccine
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (antibacterial soap is not necessary and may contribute to the growing problem of antibiotic resistance); when soap and water aren't available, then use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Throw out used tissues
- When scheduling visits with your senior friend, determine how he/she is feeling and identify if they have any flu-like systems; If they do and you don't feel comfortable visiting, schedule another time.

15TH HOLIDAY GIFT PROJECT SERVES 330

Our 15th annual 2009 Holiday Gift project finished on time and provided about \$12,000 worth of gift cards to over 330 clients.

Our success depends on the support of many. Case Managers crafted gift requests for our most vulnerable seniors. Ten staff members and eight Commonwealth Corps volunteers stepped forward to handle the more difficult cases. And over 80 volunteers sorted and/or delivered gifts.

My special thanks to Cia Boynton, Volunteer Services Commonwealth Corps member, who created colorful flyers promoting the Giving Trees and handled the rush of volunteers and gifts calmly and with good cheer. And a thank you to Virginia LeMire, Corps member from last year, who called many merchants to donate gift cards.

Clients received gift cards to shop for groceries, pharmacy items and clothing through the Giving Trees sponsored by The Crafty Yankee in Lexington Center, and TomTom Inc. in Concord. Shoppers were encouraged to visit the Giving Trees through letters to local papers, and we also solicited gift cards from the major grocery stores. Thanks to the generosity of shoppers, staff, Board members and volunteers, all gift requests were met.

It is a time consuming project, but it is heartening to hear from grateful seniors and their families. One wrote in to say:

Thank you for your generosity. I shall "hit" Stop and Shop and buy staples and a treat for myself, and some tasty goody I can share with others. I'm also delighted with the Christmas ornament. Frankly, I am overwhelmed. Thanks again for your kindness and thoughtfulness. May you be showered with blessings now and always. (Katherine R)

The holidays are a difficult time for many of our clients. Thank you for your kindness in bringing comfort to those who need a little extra help.