

# Senior Connection

MORRIS SENIOR CENTER  
♦  
January / February 2026



## Director's Digest

We certainly wish you and your loved ones a safe and healthy New Year! May 2026 be a year of hope and good health for you and those you love.

The New Year is the perfect time to start a new exercise program (with the approval from your physician, of course). Join us for our weekly "Mature Women's Fitness & Wellness" classes held every Thursday, from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm. The class offers balance and strength training and is open and welcoming to all of the Mature Women in our Community! Suggested donation of \$3 per class.

Old Man Winter is here to stay so please be certain to take extra care when walking on sidewalks and driveways, as well as when driving on the roadways. Snowy and icy conditions are with us!

Taking a little bit of extra time and stepping carefully, can possibly spare you the pain that could be associated with slipping and falling on the ice and / or snow. Take it slow and be safe!

Don't forget about our micro Library here at the Center! Colder temperatures and shorter days are the perfect time to curl up with a good read, cozy blanket and a cup of tea for the afternoon. There is no time limit when borrowing one of our books - slow reader / juggling three books at once? No problem! Hold onto your book as long as you need! No judgement or pressure from us to return and certainly no late fees!

Enjoy our newsletter!

*Kristen L. Davila*

In this newsletter you can expect:

St. Pat's Bash!

CT Flower & Garden Show

Lunch & Learn

BUNCO!

Lunch Bunch

Mini Bus Adventures!

# lunch & learn

Each **Lunch & Learn** event will feature an interesting speaker / event / topic and of course, lunch, once per month—on the third Tuesday of each month. Lunch may sometimes be a catered event, sometimes a pot luck or brown bag. **Lunch & Learn** will always be FREE! All are encouraged to attend—share with your friends and neighbors!

**Tuesday, January 20—12 pm:** We'll be welcoming back our friends from **CONNECT PT** of Watertown. This month's topic will be How to Manage Stiffness in the Cold. Come listen to **Connect PT** regarding management of your stiffness and learn some gentle stretches to help you move better!

\*This is a BROWN BAG lunch event. Dessert provided courtesy of **CONNECT PT**.

Reservations required!\*

**Tuesday, February 17—12 pm:** We will be welcoming representatives from **AT & T** who will be here to answer ALL of your technology related questions - even if you aren't an **AT & T** customer! Can't figure out how to download an app on your phone? Can't find your photos on your iPad? Bring your tech questions today!

\*This is a BROWN BAG lunch event. Dessert sponsored by **AT & T**. Space is limited and reservations are required.

While the program is free of charge, advance registration is mandatory. Please call or email us to register for one or both. Looking forward to seeing you soon!



## Luck of the Irish!

We are ALL a little Irish on March 17—it's Saint Patrick's Day, of course!

Let's celebrate Ireland's patron Saint by eating some yummy corned beef and all the trimmings!

We'll enjoy a delicious catered complete corned beef dinner, an amazing dessert and fabulous company! Who can forget LIVE entertainment, treats and raffle prizes!

Don't forget to wear green and watch for leprechauns!

**Tuesday, March 10, 2026**  
**12:30 pm**  
**\$20.00 per person**  
**Morris Senior Center**



## CT Flower & Garden Show

Are you already yearning for your roses and azaleas to come back into bloom? We have just the excursion for you!

We're heading to the *CT Convention Center* overlooking the beautiful Connecticut River for their 44th Annual Connecticut Flower and Garden Show! This year's theme is "*The Storybook Garden*". You'll experience more than 300 displays and activities, aisles filled with fresh flowers, plants, garden ornaments, herbs, bulbs, seeds and more! Seminars are FREE with admission to the show!

Limited seating—call / email to register. Payment required immediately upon sign up.

**Friday, February 20**  
**9:30 am departure**  
**\$30.00 per person, bus / entry tix**



## Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet on the first Friday of each month. Each month, we'll showcase a different restaurant in our area to enjoy lunch together. You'll make your reservation for Lunch Bunch with us, but we'll meet directly at the showcased restaurant.

**Friday, February 6; 12:00 pm**— This month's showcased restaurant is **Carlito's of Woodbury**, located at 20 Sherman Hill Road in Woodbury. Pizza, Italian entrees, and other comfort food served in an easygoing setting. **\*This will be a prix fixe menu at \$30.00 per person, CASH ONLY.\***

**Friday, March 6; 12:00 pm**— This month's showcased restaurant is **Lebnani Mediterranean Kitchen and Bar** located at 544 Straits Turnpike in Watertown. Bright spot serving traditional Lebanese dishes from kibbeh to shawarma to falafel plus beer, wine and cocktails. **\*This will be a CASH ONLY experience.\***

Take yourself out to lunch and join us! Email or call us today to reserve your space. Limited seating available for each **Lunch Bunch**. Join us and try something new!



## Treats & Trivia

Here's how **"Treats & Trivia"** works - we head straight into the Trivia portion of the program. Teams randomly assigned for a friendly game of Trivia with me as your game show hostess! You'll be amazed at how much trivia you really know—honestly! They'll be fun prizes for the members of the winning team and also for the members of the losing team! During intermission, you'll be treated to some treats, of course! We'll have a nice variety for you to choose from.

Please call / email us to register so we can be sure to have enough treats and prizes!

**Tuesday, February 3**  
**1:00 pm—3:00 pm / FREE at the MSC**



The State of Connecticut program is called Elderly / Disabled (Circuit Breaker) Tax Relief Program. The homeowner info line is 860-418-6290. State law provides a property tax credit program for Connecticut owners in residence of real property, who are elderly (65 and over) or totally disabled, and whose annual incomes do not exceed certain limits. The credit amount is calculated by the local assessor and applied by the tax collector to the applicant's real property tax bill. Credit amounts are based on a graduated income scale. Applications may be made with the Assessor's Office between February 1 and May 15, 2026.

Our local tax assessor here in Morris is Betsy Quist. Betsy can be reached in her office at the Morris Town Hall on Thursdays between 1 pm—4 pm. Her contact info is as follows: 860-567-6096 or via email at [assessor@morrisct.gov](mailto:assessor@morrisct.gov).

Applications for the program can be obtained from the Assessor's Office or from us here at the Morris Senior Center.



So much rich history in our Constitution State—and I'm not talking about the plethora of museums available to us! You can find tremendous doses of history in the abundance of antique stores we have in Connecticut! And not just period history, but local history and even PERSONAL history! You may find that wooden train set you played with as a child, or a dish from the dinnerware set that your Mom had or a clock just like the one your aunt had hanging on her living room wall! So much nostalgia!

Join us for our Mini Antique Shop Tour! We'll start our tour in Canton at **Antiques on the Farmington**—this is a multi-dealer shop with over 70 dealer spaces on two floors offering a fine selection of antiques and collectibles.

Our final antique stop is another popular multi - dealer shop in New Hartford - **Collinsville Antiques Company** - with over 20,000 sq. ft. of antiques and collectibles, there truly is something for everyone.

We'll also dine locally and make a stop at a great cookie bakery on the way home! A trip down memory lane!

**Thursday, January 29, 2026**

**9:30 am departure**

**\$5.00 per person**

## New Year's Superstitions!



Midnight kisses, resolution lists and firework displays galore — if you're 50-plus, you've probably rung in the new year in a number of different ways. But it might be time to try something new to mark the transition into 2026. As reported on AARP.org.

Which of these have you / will you be doing on December 31, 2025?

- Eat 12 grapes before midnight
- Make a New Year's Eve lemon pig
- Plant your way into the New Year
- Eat black-eyed peas and collard greens
- Eat sauerkraut and pork on New Year's Day
- Opening the back and front door at midnight
- Hang an onion on your door
- Smashing dishes on front door
- A New Year's kiss



## Vision Board Workshop

Have you ever heard of a Vision Board or a Dream Board?

The New Year is the perfect time to create your very own **Vision Board**. Think of it as a visual representation of your goals. They are usually poster sized visuals which contain all kinds of images and text that represent a goal that you may have.

It has been said that putting your goals on paper in a visual format can actually help you achieve them! According to *Psychology Today*, mental practices (like visualization) can increase motivation and confidence. It's also a fun arts and crafts project!

If you want to make improvements to your kitchen, for example, you can clip a picture of a home that inspires you. Or perhaps you'd like to finally take that dream vacation. Find yourself a picture of a palm tree and grab your glue! Be sure to post your vision board in a place that's within your regular line of sight because the key is to look at it as often as possible.

All supplies will be provided but you are welcome to bring along your unwanted magazines to share and a good pair of scissors.

**Tuesday, January 13**  
**1:00 pm / FREE**

**Join us and make those visions a reality!**



## Baked Feta Pasta Recipe

Have you tried the viral **Baked Feta Pasta** recipe that everyone is talking about? It really is pretty darn good! I highly recommend it! I've found that "grape / cherry" sized tomatoes work best. A brick of feta is a definite must. Pick your favorite pasta shape! Some even add grilled chicken to the dish. Either way, you can't go wrong. Let me know what you think!

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 shallot, quartered
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed
- 2 pt. cherry or grape tomatoes
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt
- Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 (8-oz) block feta
- 3 thyme sprigs
- 12 oz. short tubular pasta (such as macaroni or cavatappi)
- Zest of 1 lemon (optional)
- Fresh basil leaves, for serving

### DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Arrange a rack in center of oven; preheat to 400°. In a large ovenproof skillet or medium baking dish, combine shallot, garlic,

tomatoes, and all but 1 Tbsp. oil; season with salt and red pepper flakes and toss to combine.

Step 2: Place feta into center of tomato mixture; drizzle with reserved 1 Tbsp. oil. Scatter thyme sprigs over tomatoes.

Step 3: Bake sauce until tomatoes are bursting and feta is golden on top, 40 to 45 minutes.

Step 4: Meanwhile, in a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta, stirring occasionally, until al dente according to package directions. Reserve 1/2 cup pasta water before draining.

Step 5: To sauce, add cooked pasta, reserved pasta water, and lemon zest (if using) and stir until combined. Top with basil. ENJOY!

## Reiki with Kathy

What exactly is Reiki? And how do you even pronounce it?!

Reiki is a **Japanese energy healing technique** where practitioners use gentle hand placements (on or above the body) to channel "universal life force energy" (Rei-Ki) for deep relaxation, stress reduction, and to support the body's natural healing, working with traditional medicine by promoting well-being, though scientific evidence for specific diseases is limited and inconsistent. Sessions focus on balancing energy flow, clearing blockages, and creating feelings of peace, with practitioners directing energy to promote vitality and alleviate

physical and emotional stress.

Based on the idea that a vital life force energy flows through everyone; low energy causes stress and illness, while high energy promotes health. Clients often feel deep relaxation, warmth, and peace; they may drift into a meditative state, experiencing it as a glowing radiance flowing through them.

Potential Benefits include:

- Stress and anxiety reduction.
- Deep relaxation and improved well-being.
- Improved sleep.
- Pain and fatigue relief, especially for cancer patients.
- Complements other therapies, helping with side effects and recovery.



REIKI

**Kathy Gee** is a third degree Reiki Master and a member of the Morris Senior Center family. She has graciously agreed to donate her time and talent to us in the form of mini - Reiki sessions held here at the MSC.

Call or email us to today to schedule your personal 20 minute appointment!

**Tuesday, January 27**  
**10:00 am - 12:00 pm**  
**\*Appointments required.\***  
Donations accepted to benefit the Morris Senior Center



## BUNCO

The Morris Senior Center presents our sixth annual **Bunco Party**—a fundraiser for the Morris Senior Center Commission!

Join us for what is certain to be a FUN Sunday afternoon! Come solo or bring all of your friends—we guaran-tee a great time!

Never heard of BUNCO? No idea how to play? Well, if you can roll a pair of dice, you can play BUNCO! Trust us! We'll also be giving a "101" lesson prior to beginning the game.

Prizes will be awarded in several categories at the end of the afternoon. We'll have an amazing raffle table on display, as well.

Beverages, nibbles and dessert will be offered.

ALL Bunco supplies will be provided—just bring your smile and willingness to have a great time with us!

**\*We are SOLD OUT but are accepting names for our WAITING LIST.\***

Please email or call us: [Activities@MorrisCT.gov](mailto:Activities@MorrisCT.gov) / 860-567-7437 to add your name to our waiting list.

**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

(snow date 1/25/26)

**Doors open at 12:30 pm**  
**Dice roll at 1:00 pm**  
**\$20.00 entrance fee**



## Hartford, Our Capital City!

Our home state of Connecticut, the Constitution State, is SO full of history! Let's take a trip and soak it all in!

We'll begin with a guided tour of our **State Capitol**. This National Historic Landmark is the third Capitol building since the American Revolution! Immediately following this tour, we'll head right across the street and visit the **Museum of CT History**! So much to explore in Hartford!

We'll enjoy lunch at one of our favorite Italian spots in the City - **Salute!**

We'll also enjoy a docent led tour of **Connecticut's Old State House**, the very spot where Connecticut's democracy was born—you'll learn about how it was born and who made it happen. And we'll see some quirky things, too, like a two-headed calf, Mark Twain's bicycle and dozens of other pieces of Connecticut's amazing and eccentric history!

We'll even squeeze in a surprise stop or two because who doesn't love a surprise?!

**Thursday, February 26, 2026**  
**9:30 am departure**  
**\$15 per person, bus / entry fees**



## Friday Movie Matinees!

Did you know that there are many famous actor, actresses, playwrights and producers that call the Northwest Corner of Connecticut home? One actress in particular, **Meryl Streep**, has owned an estate here in the Northwest Corner for a very long time.

In honor of our "neighbor" Meryl, we'll be highlighting her blockbuster movies during this Movie Matinee series!

**January 9 - The Laundromat**, R (comedy / thriller). When widow Ellen Martin's idyllic vacation takes an unthinkable turn, she begins an investigation that leads to two cunning lawyers in Panama.

**January 23 - Little Women**, PG (romance / drama). In the years after the Civil War, Jo March lives in New York and makes her living as a writer, while her sister Amy studies painting in Paris. Amy has a chance encounter with Theodore, a childhood crush who proposed to Jo but was ultimately rejected. Their oldest sibling, Meg, is married to a schoolteacher,

while shy sister Beth develops a devastating illness that brings the family back together.

**February 13 - Mamma Mia**, PG-13 (musical / comedy). Donna (Meryl Streep), an independent hotelier in the Greek islands, is preparing for her daughter's wedding with the help of two old friends. Meanwhile Sophie, the spirited bride, has a plan. She secretly invites three men from her mother's past in hope of meeting her real father and having him escort her down the aisle on her big day.

**February 27 - It's Complicated**, R (comedy / romance). Jane (Meryl Streep), a successful restaurateur, has been divorced from Jake (Alec Baldwin) for many years, although they remain friends. When an innocent meal together turns into an affair, Jane finds that she is the other woman in the now-remarried Jake's life. Meanwhile, Adam (Steve Martin), an architect hired to remodel her kitchen, is still stinging from his own divorce. He finds himself falling in love with Jane but soon realizes that he has become part of a triangle.

*Thank you for reading!*

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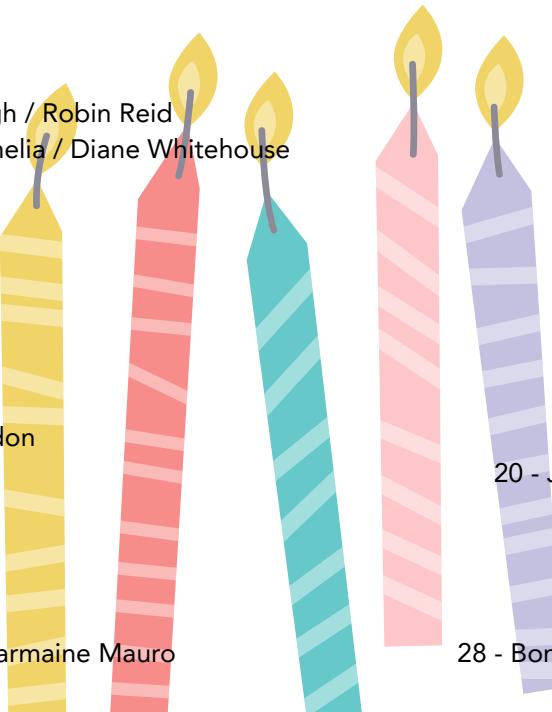
Catherine Wheeler

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# Brrrr...Happy Winter Birthday!

## January

2 - Donna Showalter  
4 - Jan Beauregard / Gail Fairclough / Robin Reid  
5 - Virginia Bennett / Patricia D'Amelia / Diane Whitehouse  
8 - Janet Arel  
9 - Steve Singer  
10 - Rosemary Petronis  
12 - Kathleen Gee  
15 - Mary Ann Norelli  
18 - Rita Spinelli  
19 - Lewis Tanner  
22 - Linda Douthwright / Phil Sheldon  
23 - Travis McNeil  
24 - Marie Hoffman  
26 - Lisa Lohnau  
27 - Marie Heirz / Michael Shuhi  
28 - Bonnie Palmer  
29 - Bob Kirchner / Lee Lyons / Charmaine Mauro  
30 - Kathy Murray



## February

1 - Christine Terlecki  
2 - Timothy Wakeman  
3 - Brenda Lagosz  
4 - Bonnie Lawrence  
6 - Joanne White  
8 - Mary Fretts  
9 - Sandy Marchetti  
14 - Linda Kelly / Donna Potwin  
15 - Mary Ann Ryan  
16 - Jeanette Shafer  
17 - Dottie Lynch  
20 - John Dudonis / Eugene Savickas  
21 - Gail Gordon  
23 - Helen Wasti  
24 - Lynn Dayton  
26 - Marge Neri / Steve Tichy  
28 - Bonnie Palmer / Eugene Thompson