

Town of Barkhamsted

Weekly Email

September 3, 2026

From the Desk of Meaghan Cook, First Selectman

This weekend will be the final weekend of the Barkhamsted Farmers Market for the 2026 season.

The market will be open from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Town Garage this Saturday. Please stop by for one last market day and support our local vendors. They have done a great job this season!

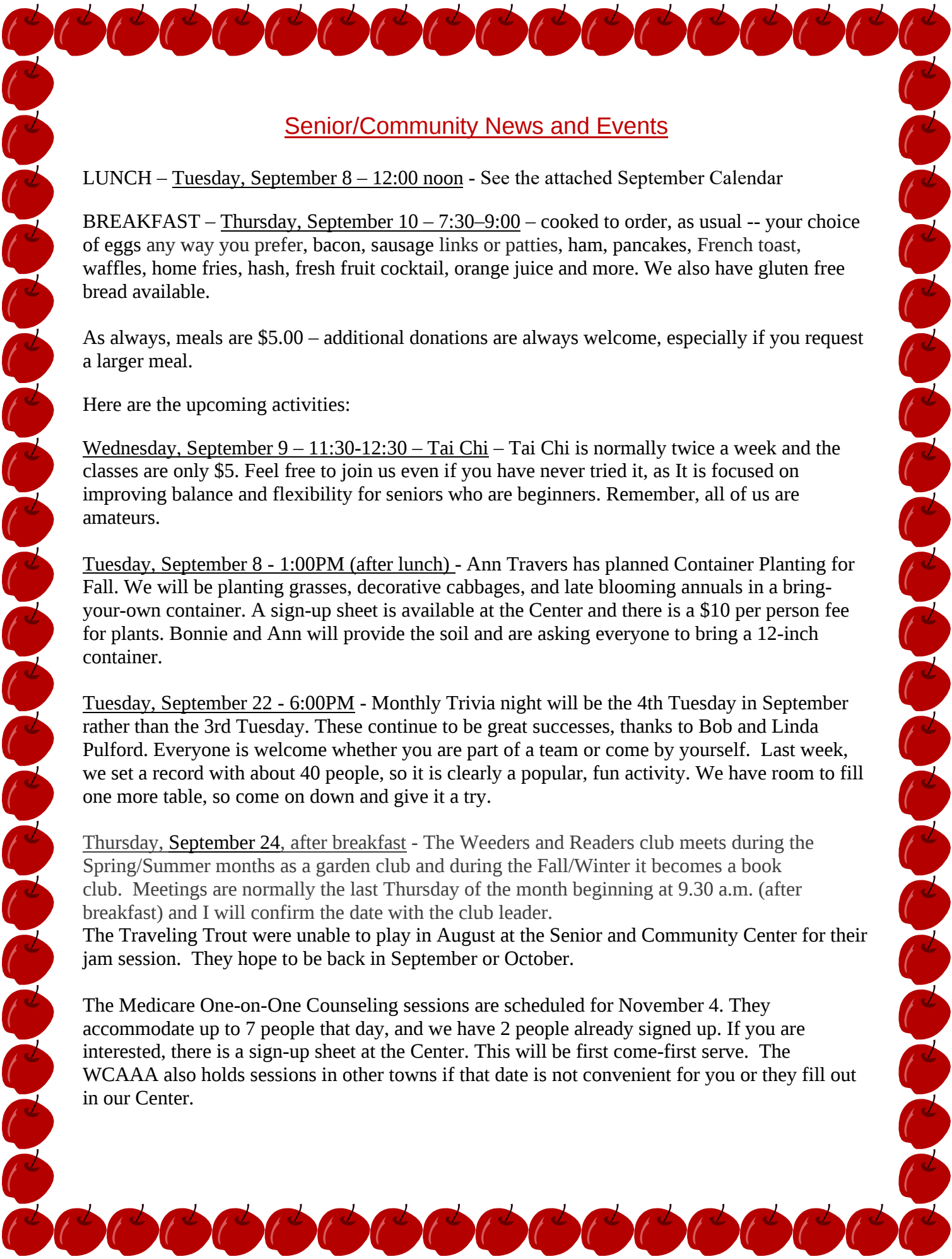
Fall is around the corner and with it comes cooler temperatures and the need for heating fuel. If you or someone you know is or will be in need of assistance for heating, please contact Debbie Brydon at 860 379 1314. Appointments for completing fuel assistance applications will begin the week of September 14th.

School is now in session. Just a reminder to leave a little earlier in the morning if you are encountering bus traffic. Passing buses when lights are flashing puts everyone in danger. Be patient, or leave a few minutes earlier than usual. Let's keep everyone safe!

It may only be September but we are already planning for Christmas in Riverton! The Union Agricultural Society will be changing up the holiday light display at the fairgrounds this year. They are looking for some sponsorship. If you have a desire to be involved, have some great display ideas or wish to sponsor a spot, please contact me at 860 379 8285 or by email at mcCook@barkhamsted.us Bryce Zygmunt has already got his big wheel spinning with a plan to bring one of his monster vehicles and light up the south field. More locations, more displays and a whole lot of Holiday Fun!

- Meaghan





Senior/Community News and Events

LUNCH – Tuesday, September 8 – 12:00 noon - See the attached September Calendar

BREAKFAST – Thursday, September 10 – 7:30–9:00 – cooked to order, as usual -- your choice of eggs any way you prefer, bacon, sausage links or patties, ham, pancakes, French toast, waffles, home fries, hash, fresh fruit cocktail, orange juice and more. We also have gluten free bread available.

As always, meals are \$5.00 – additional donations are always welcome, especially if you request a larger meal.

Here are the upcoming activities:

Wednesday, September 9 – 11:30-12:30 – Tai Chi – Tai Chi is normally twice a week and the classes are only \$5. Feel free to join us even if you have never tried it, as It is focused on improving balance and flexibility for seniors who are beginners. Remember, all of us are amateurs.

Tuesday, September 8 - 1:00PM (after lunch) - Ann Travers has planned Container Planting for Fall. We will be planting grasses, decorative cabbages, and late blooming annuals in a bring-your-own container. A sign-up sheet is available at the Center and there is a \$10 per person fee for plants. Bonnie and Ann will provide the soil and are asking everyone to bring a 12-inch container.

Tuesday, September 22 - 6:00PM - Monthly Trivia night will be the 4th Tuesday in September rather than the 3rd Tuesday. These continue to be great successes, thanks to Bob and Linda Pulford. Everyone is welcome whether you are part of a team or come by yourself. Last week, we set a record with about 40 people, so it is clearly a popular, fun activity. We have room to fill one more table, so come on down and give it a try.

Thursday, September 24, after breakfast - The Weeders and Readers club meets during the Spring/Summer months as a garden club and during the Fall/Winter it becomes a book club. Meetings are normally the last Thursday of the month beginning at 9.30 a.m. (after breakfast) and I will confirm the date with the club leader.

The Traveling Trout were unable to play in August at the Senior and Community Center for their jam session. They hope to be back in September or October.

The Medicare One-on-One Counseling sessions are scheduled for November 4. They accommodate up to 7 people that day, and we have 2 people already signed up. If you are interested, there is a sign-up sheet at the Center. This will be first come-first serve. The WCAAA also holds sessions in other towns if that date is not convenient for you or they fill out in our Center.

I am still working on scheduling a trip using a bus from the Northwest CT Transit District. Their buses are free to us, since the Town pays dues to the district, which provides that service. Sorry for the delay, but it seems to be difficult to find a trip that is both handicapped accessible, and fun and interesting.

If you would like to hold a crafts or other activity or have an additional exercise class that you would like, please let me know. If you have ideas for events or programs you would like to have us schedule, please reach out to me and I will work to get them on the calendar.

We are still collecting food for the Community Food Bank in Barkhamsted. It is extremely important that those who can help, contribute what they can, even if it is a small amount. The food bank is at the Pleasant Valley Methodist Church and does a great service for those in need. Check their Facebook page for their operating hours. We also have a box at the Center if you would like to leave a donation off and we will make sure it gets to the Food Bank. If you have food or cash to donate and they are not open, you can also message them on Facebook to let them know about your donation. Their Facebook page is

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551048540688>.

They are open every other week on Monday and Thursday. Here are the dates and times for the first half of September.

Monday, September 14th 4-7 p.m.

Thursday, September 17th 2-4 p.m.

That's it for today. Please stay safe. Feel free to reach out to me if you need assistance and I will do whatever I can to help or get help from the Town.

Don Stein



Sign Up For Fun Fall Programs With The Barkhamsted Recreation Department



Fall Karate 2026 **(For Children and Adults)**

Children's Program- Class 1

Thursdays, September 24, October 1, 8, 15, 29, November 5, 12, 19 and a back up date of December 3 for inclement weather.) the program will be held in the Barkhamsted Elementary School in the Gym or cafe from 6:00-6:45 p.m.

White Belts (Beginners ages 5 to 12)

Little Dragons-(ages 5 & 6)-Basic Karate skills, Basic Kata, target drills and exercise, simple self defense

Mighty Tigers (ages 7 & 8)-Stronger Karate basics and Kata, Stretching, exercise, target drills and self defense

Karate Rangers (ages 9-12)-Karate Basics, including kicking, kata, self-defense, exercise to level, target drills

Fee: \$80.00 for the eight-week session (New-\$5.00 discount for each additional family member that signs up) ***Note***New students are white belts and receive uniform

Fee includes: Belt and/or Stripe, Belt or Stripe Test and Certificate (Note: Promotion to higher belt levels will require multiple sessions)

[Fall Karate Registration Link](#)

Family/Teen and Adult Karate – Class 2

Thursdays, September 24, October 1, 8, 15, 29, November 5, 12, 19 and a back up date of December 3 for inclement weather.) Barkhamsted Elementary School in the Gym or Library from 7:00-7:45 p.m.) in the Gym or Library 7:00-7:45 p.m. White Belts (Beginners ages 13 and up)-7:00 to 7:45 p.m.

Teen/Adults-(Ages 13 and up)-Kenpo Karate Forms and Self Defense Techniques, Basic kicking drills.

This is a great opportunity to learn karate with family members or solo.

\$80.00 per 8 week sessions New-\$5.00 discount for each additional family member that signs up for Karate!

NoteNew students are white belts and receive uniform

Please pre-register through this link- [Fall Karate Registration Link](#)

Halloween Sock Hop!

The Recreation Department's Annual Sock Hop will be held on Friday, October 30 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Join us for this annual family event, with music and fun at the Peoples State Forest Pavilion- \$6.00 fee per person will be collected on-site. All participants must pre-register and children must be accompanied by an adult family member at all times. There will be quality gift card costume contest prizes for adults, children and families! Parents and caregivers, please dress up too! Be ready for some Halloween Fun and dance the night away! We will have lots of fun! Please bring flashlights or headlamps as it will be dark towards the end of the dance going back to cars or when using the port-o-potties. Everyone must pre-register from this link- [Halloween Sock Hop Registration Link](#)

Before Thanksgiving Holiday Hike with Hot Apple Cider, Hot Chocolate and Cookies! (Fun for the whole family)



Join us as we hike up to the beautiful Beaver Brook Marsh Boardwalk trail in Peoples State Forest at 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 21. Get ready for the Thanksgiving holiday by spending time with

friends, exercising and enjoying our beautiful forest surrounded by the beautiful Wild and Scenic Farmington River as we hike to the Beaver Brook Boardwalk Marsh Trail and enjoy a fun afternoon. Please dress appropriately with proper gear. This will be a moderately strenuous hike but well worth it. It will be held rain or shine! Families are welcome. We will also enjoy a "Pot Luck" snack together as we take a break at the beautiful Boardwalk and at the end of the hike. Please bring water and your favorite "pot luck" snack. We will also provide individually packaged desserts and hot chocolate/cider. Please Register by Monday, November 16 from this link- [Thanksgiving Hike link](#) This hike will be led jointly by the Barkhamsted Recreation Department, Farmington River Steward and FALPS. Please meet at the parking area on East River Road at bottom of Greenwoods Road (near the gate) (The road that leads up to the Stone Museum) at 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 21. **(Note-it is hunting season, if you can wear orange or a bright colored jacket it is recommended)** Depending on the group size/level of difficulty we may split up into two groups and have a few different options for length of the hike/walk.) (The full hike will be approximately 3.5-4 miles)



Fall/Winter Pickleball Session 2025/2026

Fall Pickleball Free Demo Night will be held on Wednesday, November 19 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. in the Barkhamsted Elementary School gym. Come down and check out what the fun is all about! Please wear sneakers and bring a Paddle if you have one. Players from the past sessions are encouraged to come and help the new players enjoy the sport that night and also get some play time on the courts before our fall/winter session begins. Participants can also register that night for fall program. The demo night is FREE!

It is time to get off the couch and join us for the very fun and new Pickleball Fall/Winter Session. All levels and abilities are welcome. This fun sport combines many elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. You will get great exercise and have a blast.

Day-Wednesdays

Location-Barkhamsted Elementary School Gym

Time-6:00-9:00 p.m. (this program is for adults **(high school students are also welcome)**)

Dates- November 18th-Free Demo Night from 6:00-9:00 p.m.

November 18, December 2, 9, 16, January 6, 13, 20, 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 10 and back up snow date Feb. 17 (New 10 week session this year!!)

Please pre-register through this link- [Pickleball link](#)

Fee: \$20.00 for residents, \$25.00 for non-residents (no pro-rations) Pre-registration is required. Registration deadline is November 19th at Demo night. Please bring your own paddle and wear sneakers. Please mail your registration to The Barkhamsted Recreation Department- Attention Donna Bastrzycki- Recreation Director 67 Ripley Hill Road, Pleasant Valley, CT 06063 or bring your payment to the Free Demo night on Wed. November 19, 2025

To learn more about Pickleball visit-

https://www.pickleballcentral.com/Pickleball_Videos_s/204.htm

Mark Your Calendars!

Barkhamsted Rec. Ski Program 2027



Children in Grades 3-6 will enjoy a fun night of skiing at Ski Sundown with the Barkhamsted Recreation Dept! All registration forms must be completed and paid for by **Friday, October 23** (Please register on time to help ensure a safe and fun program. Important-The program requires one total check by the town to be made out to Sundown. All registrations must be complete by 10/24/2025 in order for everything to be submitted to Ski Sundown on time.

Chaperones and volunteers are essential in order for this program to be possible. We ask again this year parents ski with their children if possible and children must be accompanied by a parent/caregiver/helper while at Sundown. Please email Donna Bastrzycki at barkhamstedrec@barkhamsted.us if you can also help out as a volunteer or chaperone by Wed. November 18

Where: Ski Sundown

Age Group: 3rd - 6th graders

When: Wednesday afternoon for 5 weeks (after school) (January 6, 13, 20, 27, Feb. 3 backup day will be Feb. 10 if needed. We will add on weeks if School is canceled or there is an early release from school.) (If there is no school or an early release then we will not have the Ski program that day and the program will be extended) **Forms will be given to each child in grades 3-6 the week of September 21 with pricing.**

Time: 4:00 till 7:00 (with one hour lessons starting AT 5:00 p.m.)

ANY LATE REGISTRATIONS AFTER October 24 will have to be added on at Ski Sundown and there is an additional \$25.00 late fee paid directly to Ski Sundown and \$5.00 late fee to The Town of Barkhamsted. There are NO guarantees that space will be available after the deadline. Last year they did not accept registrations after the deadline. P Ski Sundown asked us to have a firm deadline with not many add or changes. Please be sure to carefully fill out your child's form with their Ski Level and info. *Helmets are required! Please mark and label your children's skis and equipment. Locks are strongly recommended. (Prices below include bus and snacks on the last night) **All Parents and Children must attend the on-line the Ski Sundown Safety Meeting**

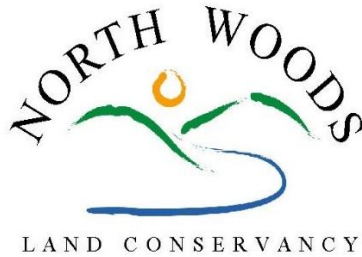
Fee: Lesson and Lift + bus: \$405.00 Lift Only + bus: \$265.00

Pass Holder Lesson + bus: \$250.00 Equipment Rental: \$151.00 (this is in addition to the ski prices- either lesson, lift and bus, Pass holder lesson and bus or Lift only and bus.) Pricing will be updated after the Ski Club meeting the second week of September and all forms with pricing will be sent to the school.

(Parents/Caregivers drive their children home from Ski Sundown. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to attend each of the weeks and ski or help watch their children ski outside/ Please consider this is an outdoor focused program before registering. You can register at the Halloween Sock Hop and bring all of your paper work and check there if you wish!)

Please make checks out to the Town of Barkhamsted and fill out the both the Recreation Department Registration form and Ski Sundown Forms completely

Please note for all programs that are held in the Barkhamsted Elementary School, If there is no school or an early release then we will not have the program that day and the program will be extended if possible) The Halloween Dance will be held rain or shine. Once you are registered, you will be on the guest list! Please register before the deadline for all programs to help ensure safety and your spot. Forms can be either mailed or dropped off at the outside mailbox at Barkhamsted Town Hall-67 Ripley Hill Road-Barkhamsted, CT 06063 **Mark Your Calendars- Christmas in Riverton will be December 4-6, 2026**



“Hidden in Plain Sight” David Leff Trail Walk

with Joanne Groth Saturday September 5th 10:00 AM

The trail is located in the American Legion State Forest in Hartland at the end of School Street in Riverton. Joanne Groth from the Hartland Historical Society, will guide you on a leisurely walk on this ¼ mile trail and share tidbits of the history of the site along the way. Parking is limited at the trailhead, so please reserve for those with a handicap sticker. You will need to park in the lot for The Shops at Riverton and walk a short distance to the trailhead.



NATURE RANGERS CLUB



Calling All Budding Naturalists!

Hello from the Nature Rangers Club, a program for preschoolers where little ones are introduced to the world of nature. Each month we feature a species of local flora and/or fauna found here in our beautiful Northwestern Hills. Blending art & science, sessions include ecological tidbits reinforced with an associated storybook reading, arts & crafts and more.

Please come join us!

DATE & TIME

September 16th @ 10:30 am

LOCATION

Hartland Public Library
61 Center Street
West Hartland, CT 06091

*Sponsored by North Woods Land Conservancy
Graciously hosted by the Hartland Public Library*

Registration required by Sept. 11th at dcnaturerangers@gmail.com
Children must be accompanied by parent/guardian at all times

September 2026

Barkhamsted Senior/Community Center Newsletter

Center Director: Don Stein

Kitchen Manager: Bonnie Reynolds



We welcome you to the Senior/Community Center! Our goal is to provide interesting, pertinent programming, social opportunities, and weekly lunch and breakfast.

Upcoming Events:

Container Planting Activity:

Ann Travers will conduct **Container Planting for Fall**, to be held on **Tuesday, September 8 at 1 p.m.** We will be planting grasses, decorative cabbages, and late blooming annuals. **Bring your own 12 inch container.** A sign-up sheet is available at the Center or text Bonnie Boyle at 860-707-5033.

Barkhamsted Womens Club

The BWC will meet **September 9 (Wednesday) at 7 p.m** at the community room in the Barkhamsted Town Garage. Upcoming on **October 14** is their annual Open House at the Community/Senior Center on West River Road.

Trivia Night (6 pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month with the exception of September, which will be held Sept. 22. This event is open to everyone.)

Linda and Bob Pulford started Trivia nights to provide a fun family event for our community. They also wanted it to be event different than the typical trivia played at bars.

Here, teams of up to eight are given twenty questions of general knowledge, some easy and some difficult.

The fee of \$2 per person goes toward the prize and a donation to the Center. Free desserts, soda, and coffee are offered but you may BYOB and snacks.



Above: Linda and Bob Pulford. Below: a packed house.



Western CT Area Agency on Aging

Tuesday, November 4, one-on-one session for counseling on Medicare options. Sign up ahead of time at the Center.

Barkhamsted History Trivia

On October 19-20, 2021, West River Road was closed and the Senior/Community Center was used as a crew meeting space for "Mr. Harrigan's Phone", a film based on a Steven King Novella.

September Birthdays

Janet Simmons	September 11
Jerrilynn Wiasuk	September 17
Pat Stark	September 18
Dee Connors	September 19
Ken Steadman	September 24
Julie Sullivan	September 26
Dean Reynolds	September 26
Corky Lavieri	September 29

These are the folks behind the scenes who clean up after the kitchen crew has finished. A resounding THANKS to these three and to all others who help with clean up.



Noreen at breakfast

Our Dish Washing Crew



Charlie, at Breakfast



Ted, at lunch

Don't forget the **Community Food Bank** in Barkhamsted. Located at the Methodist Church in Pleasant Valley, it serves many in our area. A box is located at the center for contributions. Thank you

Jane Gurka's Story (the Condensed Version)



The daughter of four generations of “gold beaters”, Jane grew up in West Hartford, Windsor and Charlestown, New Hampshire. As a child she has fond memories of family trips with the National Railway Historical Society, and bird walks with the Audubon Society.

Married, with her own young family, there were camping trips; later there was line dancing, which Jane taught at the New Hartford Senior Center. She found and documented all of the covered bridges in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Moving to Barkhamsted in 1996, Jane found a passion for English Mastiffs which she bred and showed for twenty-nine years. Seventeen of the “gentle giants” lived their lives at the Gurka home.

Jane learned the family business early. M. Swift & Sons, established in 1887, made gold leaf through an extended process of beating gold to the thickness of 0.0001 mm, about 500 times thinner than a human hair. In high school she was an all-around worker, doing “whatever needed to be done” from filing to acting as a “go-fer”. After graduation from college she held multiple jobs for the business: managing human resources, purchasing, and exporting. These positions led to extensive world travel. Located in Hartford, M. Swift and Sons was the sole producer of gold leaf in the country. Noteworthy is the gift that her father and the company gave to the State of

Connecticut: the donation of the gold leaf that now crowns the dome of our State Capitol Building.

Of her father and the family, Jane is especially proud that the company took such great care of their employees, providing for them during employment and continuing after retirement.

Janes’ own life philosophy? Be compassionate and above all, be grateful. Don’t judge others, for you never know what they are going through.

Bean Hole Beans: A History

A fifty year tradition, the famous Bean Hole Bean suppers of the Pleasant Valley United Methodist Church were noteworthy in Barkhamsted history.

When these dinners were cancelled during the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic there were many who mourned the loss of this social event. It was a ham dinner with potato salad, coleslaw, the famous beans and homemade pies for dessert.

The beans were prepared early in the day, sealed, placed in a unique underground cooking pit filled with hot coals, then slow cooked for eight hours.

May Dunbar, a member of the church and a resident of West River Road, was a participant from the beginning. Her daughter, Doris (1931-2023), passed on this recipe which May had re-portioned in family size.

Bean Hole Bean Recipe

May Dunbar

- 1 lb. Great Northern Beans
- ½ Cup White Sugar
- 2 Tbsp. Brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. Gulden’s brown mustard
- 1 ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 small piece salt pork
 - Soak beans overnight. Drain liquid and discard.
 - Cover with water and cook until beans split. Drain and save liquid.
 - Add the rest of the ingredients and enough of the reserved liquid to almost cover the beans.
 - Bake in bean pot 9 to 10 hours until tender.

SEPTEMBER 2026

Barkhamsted Senior and Community Center

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 12:00 Lunch Ham, sweet potatoes, green beans, dinner roll, ice cream	2 11:30 Tai Chi	3 7:30 – 9:00 Breakfast	4	5
6	7 11:30 Tai Chi Food Bank open 4-7 p.m.	8 12:00 Lunch Spaghetti and meat sauce, salad, hard roll, Italian Ice, cookie 1:00 p.m. "Container planting"	9 11:30 Tai Chi	10 7:30 – 9:00 Breakfast Food Bank open 2-4 p.m.	11	12
13	14 9:30 Yoga 11:30 Tai Chi	15 12:00 Lunch Salisbury steak, Mashed potato, vegetables, Birthday cake	16 11:30 Tai Chi	17 7:30 – 9:00 Breakfast	18	19
20	21 9:30 Yoga 11:30 Tai Chi Food Bank open 4-7 p.m.	22 <u>12:00</u> Lunch Vegetable soup, grilled cheese sandwich, peach pudding Trivia Night 6 p.m.	23 11:30 Tai Chi	24 7:30 – 9:00 Breakfast <i>Weeders and Readers 9 am</i> Food Bank open 2-4 p.m.	25	26
27	28 11:30 Tai Chi	29 12:00 Lunch Chicken and biscuits, green beans, Ice cream with fresh fruit	30 11:30 Tai Chi			

SERVICES: Ambulance: Call 911

Barkhamsted Senior/Community Center: 860-738-1264

A COMPLETE LIST of SERVICES is available at The Barkhamsted Senior/Community Center and at Barkhamsted Town Hall

Home Ground

I'd like to invite you to read The Home Ground newsletter. It will be about the outdoor places surrounding where we live, containing diverse articles and observations about nature, and the conditions which make the Barkhamsted area unique and remarkable. You may find this and other Home Ground articles at: knotheads.substack.com. It is free, and by subscribing you will be sent notification of new articles.

Dave Lewis

Birds to the Bees

The colors of August can seem harsh and worn. The greens look tired, and the easy colors of spring and early summer now seem to glare back with deep shades of purple and yellow. It is the harvest season for us. For plants, it means either a permanent stop or a halt until next year.

August is a time in nature to prepare before autumn puts an end to summer's bounty, and our local animals are doing what they can to get ready. The birds which are getting ready to leave need the rich sugars and carbohydrates of fruit and berries to provide the crucial energy to move away. As they consume the fruit, they spread seeds far and wide by their droppings. In this way, they help to spread the range of plant species, including invasives like bittersweet, barberry and multiflora rose which can cause problems for us. A good example is how they spread the seeds of Asiatic Bittersweet far and wide. When this invasive vine attaches itself to trees, the extra weight along with the snow and ice in winter causes trees to topple and leaves us with many power outages.



Birds that stick with us all year long also depend on insects as an important part of their diet, including during winter. Many insects change their body chemistry to produce an antifreeze preventing them from freezing and making them a food source for birds throughout the year.



Along about now, it is common to find a praying mantis or two, as well as a walking stick warming itself on a sunny wall of our houses or decks. The praying mantis is top predator in the insect world, and have been known to tackle a hummingbird, sometimes positioning themselves near feeders for better hunting. It has a head which can turn 180°, allowing it to look over its shoulder. The female, is larger than its male counterpart, often eating the male before, after and even during mating. Strangely, the Connecticut state insect is the European praying mantis, and not one of our native insects. There is a much smaller native praying mantis, but it has become rare. The European mantis was imported as pest control for the Gypsy moth (now termed the spongy moth), you can see how that idea turned out.

Walking sticks on the other hand are vegetarians. They are masters of disguise, and look like, well, a walking stick. They often sway back and forth, mimicking the movement of a twig in the breeze. They are mostly nocturnal, and can be found on the sides of houses, as they rest and warm up after a night of wandering. After all, they are cold-blooded and do not get any warmer than their surroundings.



Many of the bees you see in the fall are bumblebees, and one of our local, native bees. The majority are male. and male bees can't sting you, since they lack stingers. They are often found lying still on flowers and our house surfaces in the morning, until they warm up and can take flight. Unlike honeybees, male bumblebees never return to their nest once they leave it.

Friends may be impressed by grabbing
a male bumblebee in your hand this time of year.
(Only you need to know it can't sting you.)





DEEP Wildlife Division

Take Our Survey!



We want to hear from you!

Whether you like to hunt, fish, birdwatch, hike, or simply enjoy the outdoors, please take a few minutes to complete this survey to help the Wildlife Division improve wildlife and habitat conservation in Connecticut.

Survey QR Code



SCAN HERE

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection • Bureau of Natural Resources • Wildlife Division
79 Elm Street Hartford, CT. 06106

Phone: 860-424-3011 • Email: deep.ctwildlife@ct.gov



TRIVIA NIGHT !

Tuesday, September 22nd at 6:00 PM

Barkhamsted Senior and Community Center

\$2 per person

Teams of 2 to 8 people

All ages ... bring your friends

Free coffee and desserts

All welcome for a fun night of General Knowledge Trivia. Some easy, some hard, but all FUN!