

New Milford Social Services

"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"



APRIL 2017

Greetings from Peg Molina: Paying Tribute



Issue 4.2017



The mission of New Milford Social Services is to help residents meet basic needs of food, housing, clothing maintenance of health and wellbeing, and to help provide various seasonal goods and programs for residents experiencing financial hardship.



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April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month, a time for all of us to show gratitude and celebrate the people behind SO MANY good projects and programs. Just think for a moment of all of the places where volunteers make a difference: schools and athletic fields, health care settings, libraries, food pantries and soup kitchens, places of worship and places of beauty like parks and preserves. Through natural disasters and emergencies, holidays and other celebrations volunteers play essential roles. I'm sure I could go on, but you get my drift!

Here at Social Services volunteers are crucial to the work we do and services we provide. Do you know that over the past few years, volunteers have given us the equivalent hours of three full time people? That's a lot of help! In their honor, I offer the following poem that, I feel, captures the spirit of the terrific volunteer work ethic: *To Be of Use* by Marge Piercy

*The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.*

*I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.*

*I want to be with people who submerge in the task,
who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.*

*The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphora for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.*

Think of our volunteers, the ones you encounter in all parts of your day and life . . . think about your own ways of helping and join me in feeling so grateful, and so proud for all that is accomplished and all of the kindness readily shared! We are so very fortunate! ~Peg



Financial Tip of the Month:

Paper, paper, paper...

We all have way too much paper in our lives and the temptation to just toss it in the "circular file" is great! But doing just that can end up causing us undue stress and money when we go to apply for things such as SNAP, Energy Assistance or any number of program applications. Here are some handy tips to make it stress free!

•If you are not a naturally organized person, take a large cardboard box, label it with the year and whenever you receive a paystub, bank statement, social security award letter, court documents, etc., put it in the box. This will give you one central location that you can go to when you need to find these items without having to go through the whole house.

•With the advent of the internet, most (but not all), information can be found online. If your company uses online paystubs or payment cards, make sure you know how to log on AND what your username and password is. Do the same for your bank and utility bills. Write down this information and keep it in a SECURE place.

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Happy Spring



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New Milford Social Services



Do you want to become a volunteer?

Here are a few ideas if you don't know where to start: What do you like to do? Be outside? Be with kids? Love animals? The arts? Do you prefer office tasks or getting your hands dirty? Start by figuring out what appeals to you, and then start looking into your options.

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PROGRAM UPDATES:



ENERGY ASSISTANCE: April is the final month that one can apply for energy assistance (unless you receive a shut off notice for electric heat—then deadline is May 15). Unpaid fuel deliveries made before March 31th may be eligible for help, but the focus is on those with electric heat. **All matching payments MUST be in by April 30th!** Please call our office ASAP if you have not applied!

Visit our department on the www.newmilford.org website, or come to the office for the list of documents needed to apply. Everyone is asked to bring a current electric bill. **Please have ALL paperwork at the time of your appointment.**



SUMMER=KIDS + CAMPS: YES!



Camp CONNRI is a great camp for families with children ages 7 – 12. The camp lasts 5 days, a perfect introduction to “sleep-away” camp. Run by the Salvation Army and located in Ashford, CT, it offers a full range of activities such as swimming, boating, archery, team sports, arts and crafts and nature studies. This is a Christian-based camp, but children of all religious backgrounds are welcome. The cost is \$35! **NM Social Services will be sending a group to camp for Session 7: Mon. August 7th to Fri. August 11th.** Social Services Office Coordinator, Monika, is handling registration and has applications. Transportation will be provided. Openings are available first come, first serve. Children must have had a physical within a year of August 8th.

New Milford Rec-On Summer Camp takes place June 26- August 4th, offering plenty of activity for kids *entering grades 1-9*. Social Services **now handles all scholarships for this Parks and Rec program**, based on income eligibility. Camp registration begins Monday, May 1st and registrants must create an online account at www.newmilfordrec.com prior to registering. (You can do so at the Parks and Rec office if you do not have internet access). Space is guaranteed for all children registered on May 1st and 2nd. In order to receive a scholarship contact Social Services *before* registering your child for camp.

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REGISTER NOW FOR FAMILY FIRST RE-VISITED WEEKEND IN JUNE!

The **final** Family First Retreat Weekend will take place from **June 2 – 4**. If you have attended Family First in year’s past and would like to return one more time, please contact the office or visit the Town of New Milford website and follow the Family First link under Social Services to register. In future years, this program will be revised and New Milford based, so please join us to spend time at beautiful YMCA Camp Jewell one more time! As before, the weekend will feature parent workshops, yoga, massage, horseback riding, family activities and more. If you would like to re-connect with old friends as well as make new ones, experience similar activities or something you didn’t have time to try in the past, join us for fun, renewal, challenge—all of the things that make Family First special! Registration is on a first come, first serve basis.



GRANDPARENTS & OTHER RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN:

The next meeting of New Milford’s “When You’re a Parent . . . Again” **info and support group** will be on **Thursday, April 13th** @ 5:30p.m. to 7:00p.m. at the Richmond Center. Dinner and child care are included. Come for informal conversation and resources for those in this unique situation. RSVP to Amy Bondeson at Social Services, 860-355-6079 x4.



SNAP OUTREACH THIS MONTH:

CT Institute for Families SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Outreach Worker, Sara Arroyo, will be here on Wednesdays, April 12th and May 11th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. to help people apply for SNAP online. To make an appointment with Sara (who is bi-lingual) and learn what to bring, please call our office. There are currently openings for the upcoming month; call us! This is a quick and easy way to apply for SNAP.



AFFORDABLE

HOUSING RESOURCE!:

Social Services has purchased a book and workbook called Sharing Housing—A Guidebook for Finding and Keeping Good Housemates. It looks like a terrific resource for a householder and/or home-seeker interested in this arrangement. We would love for someone to read these materials and give us feedback. We will also make them available for loan. Call Peg at the office to make arrangements.



(cont’d from pg. 1)

Local organizations like PTOs in the schools, Friends of Harrybrooke Park, Thrift Mart of New Milford, Habitat for Humanity, Animal Welfare, etc. are often looking for volunteers.

One resource for many ideas is to call United Way 2-1-1 or check their website at: www.211ct.org. On the website simply type in “volunteering” and the New Milford zip code and scores of suggestions with contact info pop up. The Volunteer Center of the United Way is another good option: 203-792-5330. Youth volunteers can line up rewarding community service through United Way’s Youth Volunteer Corps (203-792-6736) or various school clubs. Even writing “cheer up” cards or picking bouquets of flowers and dropping them off at our local nursing homes for a resident who lacks visitors can be a wonderful thing. There are so many possibilities for fulfilling volunteerism. Give it a try!



CAMPS Continued:

Scholarships go toward the cost of camp, not for special trip costs. Payment of the parent’s portion must be made by June 16. *Other camp info is in our “Family/Children” section.*

COMING SOON!! RENTERS REBATE & BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

Details on these programs will be in the May newsletter!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Family and Children



NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS: *Here's a perfect action in keeping with Volunteer Appreciation Month!* Need April vacation plans? How about giving back to our community? We are planning two days of community service, one day will be for SNIS students and one day will be for SMS. Of course, high school volunteer leaders are welcome to sign up for either or both days to be role models and helpers. Contact stacey@youthagency.org for more details (which should be ready soon)!



HEAD START currently has openings for children ages 3 and 4 for their **pre-school programs** held at Hill and Plain School. Please contact Rebecca Litz to discuss income eligibility and for other info on this great early education program.

860-304-4648 ; litz@educationconnection.org

NURTURING FAMILIES: New Milford VNA Nurturing Families and Family Support Program is a holistic and comprehensive parenting education program for parents in the NM area. They provide free monthly education groups, play groups and in-home parenting education and developmental assessments. Contact staff at [860-354-5962](tel:860-354-5962) or acook@newmilfordvna.org to find out more about the program or to enroll.



More Summer Camp Info!

CAMP JONATHAN is a unique day camp for children ages 6 to 12 who have suffered the loss of a significant loved one. It allows children to creatively explore their feelings about death, dying and bereavement in a safe environment. This summer camp, which is free of charge, is held at St. John's Episcopal Church, on Main St. in New Milford; July 24 - 29, 2017. For more information and registration please call New Milford VNA Hospice at 860-354-2216.



OTHER CAMPS: Many other camps, such as **The Pratt Center in New Milford, Greenknoll (Brookfield) YMCA Camp, Great Hollow Wilderness School in New Fairfield** and more, offer independent scholarships. Check with these organizations now as financial assistance is provided on a first-come first-serve basis.



MVP-SOS OFFERS SUPPORT FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

This organization offers financial support to school-aged youth for a broad range of enriching activities (sports, arts and other classes, field trips, **camp**s, etc.). To apply, complete their one page application (available at www.mvpsos.com or our office) and provide either proof of free/reduced lunch or first two pages of your most recent tax return.



Financial Tip of the Month...continued...

- Keep your tax returns and supporting documents for seven years. Print your tax return each year, even if you file online.
- Essential records such as birth certificates, social security cards, marriage certificates, divorce documents, passports, life insurance papers, etc. should be kept indefinitely. You might want to invest in an inexpensive fire proof lockbox or bank safe deposit box for these items.

REMINDER

Most programs require these documents from ALL members of the household. If you have other adults or adult children in your home, you may be asked to prove their income/assets as well. Be sure to have them save their paystubs and know how to access their tax returns/bank statements.

Following these tips and being more mindful about your important paperwork can save you time, frustration and money!

...If you missed any of our previous tips, link in to social services/financial fitness on our town's website at www.newmilford.org.



JOB SEEKERS and ADULT LEARNERS:

The New Milford Public Library has a terrific resource called **JobNow** for job seekers and those interested in prepping for GED and citizenship or learning parts of Microsoft Office programs. This product includes practice testing and live one-on-one coaching. For a quick overview, go to JobNow and check it out or stop by the library and ask the reference librarian.



COMMUNITY CULINARY SCHOOL is currently registering for its **next session beginning April 24th, 2017**. If you or someone you know is out of work, not getting enough hours at work, or ready for a change, and enjoys cooking, this may be the perfect opportunity! Classes run Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for twelve weeks. The program then assists you with finding a job in the food industry. Scholarships available. Call Director, Dawn Hammacott at 203-512-5791 for more information. Applications are available in our office or at www.communityculinaryschool.org



GOODWILL CAREER CENTER: The Goodwill Career Employment Center is located in the Goodwill Superstore at 165 Federal Road in Brookfield. They offer one-on-one job hunting guidance and other employment resources. All services are available free of charge to anyone looking for a job. Some of the courses offered include: applications, job search, internet and e-mail basics, teen employment, networking and mobile technology. For information please call 203-775-5029 or register for a class at careercenter@gwct.org .

TBICO: located in Danbury, provides a range of employment-related services, business training, and financial education for individuals seeking to become economically stable and self-sufficient. TBICO provides six week training sessions, ongoing support, and learning opportunities which help students achieve job readiness, personal and career growth, and ultimately, independence. TBICO is unique in that it offers all of its services **free** of charge to low-income and/or disadvantaged adults. For more information contact TBICO at [203-743-6695](tel:203-743-6695) or go to www.tbicoworks.org.

FOOD BANK HOURS:

Every THURSDAY from 9am-4pm.

[This is a residency-income eligible registered program]



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Please bring in your own reusable bags!!

SPECIAL NOTE: FOOD BANK CLOSSES IN SEVERE WEATHER



NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:

Even though the days are longer we may sometimes feel there isn't enough time to cook a hearty healthy meal.

Here are two quick and easy recipes for anyone's lifestyle 😊

Veggie Pizza Pita Pockets

Ingredients- Yield: 1 Serving

- 1 pita, whole wheat (cut around the sides, into flats)
- 2 tablespoons tomato sauce, unsalted
- 2 slices mozzarella cheese, part-skim
- 2 of the following vegetables: (or more) green & red peppers, sliced mushrooms, chopped broccoli, chopped red onion, chopped spinach, shredded (add your favorites!)

Directions:

1. Place one pita round, on plate.
2. Spread 2 Tablespoons of tomato sauce on pizza.
3. Sprinkle various chopped vegetable over sauce.
4. Layer two slices of cheese on top of sauce.
5. Cover with the other half of pita round.
6. Microwave 35-45 seconds, or until cheese melts.
7. Slice in half, let cool, and enjoy!

(sharedfromSnap4CT.org)



Tuscan Style Pasta with White Beans

Ingredients- Yield: 4 Servings

- 12 ounces pasta (try wheat pasta, rice pasta or tricolor)
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 5 large garlic cloves (finely chopped)
- ¼ pound curly escarole, kale (or any green you like) (sliced)
- 1 can cannellini beans (white beans) (drained and rinsed)
- 1 can diced tomatoes with juice (undrained)
- ⅔ cup dry white wine (optional)
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves (thinly sliced)

Directions:

1. Cook pasta according to the package directions.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
3. Add garlic and cook until slightly browned (less than a minute).
4. Add escarole; stirring occasionally until wilted, about 2 minutes.
5. Add beans, tomatoes with their juice and wine.
6. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Season to taste with salt and pepper; stir in basil and heat through.
8. Drain pasta and toss with the sauce.

(sharedfromSnap4CT.org)



MOBILE FOOD PANTRY: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5th; 5:30pm-6:30pm at the parking lot of Faith Church

Our office will be CLOSED in observance of the following holiday:

Friday April 14, 2017 for Good Friday

PERMIT NO. 10

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PRESORT STANDARD



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