



New Milford Social Services



"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"

APRIL 2018

Greetings from Social Services: Paying Tribute



Issue 4.2018



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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(This was originally published last year, but well worth repeating!) 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, and the ones you encounter in all parts of your day and life . . . think about your own ways of helping and **join us 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

HappySpring



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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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Financial Tip of the Month:

As you receive this it may be starting to (finally) feel like spring. Our wonderful friends at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) have prepared a very useful blog piece on some tips to "spring clean" up your finances. You can read this blog in full by going to: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/blog/> For those who lack a good computer to try this link, here are some of the highlights:

1. Request a free copy of your **credit report** from <https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action> (This is so important that you should go to the library or our office if you can't print one up on your own). They also have info on what to look for in your report.
2. **Address debt:** Facing a big debt makes us want to burrow under the covers, but face it we must. At this time of year many folks have been on winter protection with

Continued on Page 3...

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 the 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 or are unsure what you need to do to meet your commitment!

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.

Operation Fuel will continue to provide help through April 27 for deliverable fuels and a bit longer for electric heat households. Call us if interested in applying!

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 8 – 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 6th to Fri. August 10th.** 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 6th.

New Milford Rec-On Summer Camp takes place **June 28- August 8th**, offering plenty of activity for kids *entering grades 1-9*. **Social Services handles all scholarships for this Parks and Rec program**, based on income eligibility. Camp registration begins Tuesday, May 1 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...*Continued to the right*



(Cont'd from pg. 1)

Local organizations like PTOs in the schools, Friends of Harrybrooke Park, the Wheels Program, 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 volunteer activity. 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 on page 3.*



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 12th @ 5:30p.m. - 7:00p.m.** at the John Pettibone Community Center. Dinner and child care are included. Come for informal conversation and resources for those in this unique situation. RSVP to Sarah Geary at Social Services, 860-355-6079 x4.



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

Details on these programs will be in the *May newsletter!*



FREE DENTAL CARE FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN!!!

The CT Mission of Mercy Dental Clinic Takes place this year in **TORRINGTON on April 20 – 21**. Doors open at 8 am (best to arrive earlier). Location is Torrington High School, 50 Major Bessie Dr. No eligibility requirements; first come, first served. Services include: exams, cleanings, fillings, extractions, root canals (limited), interim partial dentures (limited). This is a wonderful opportunity for those without ready access to take care of your oral health!



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 will make these resources available for loan. Please call Peg at the office to make arrangements.



A BARBER POLE AT SOCIAL SERVICES!

New Milford resident and long-time barber, Leslie Roy, is giving back to her community by offering her services **HERE** on the **3rd Thursday of each month, 12:30 – 4:30 pm!** Social Services clients can get a **FREE haircut** by calling ahead to sign up. Leslie specializes in cuts for men, children, and women with short hair, cut above and around the ear. Call Monika to make arrangements. Sign up now for **April 19th**.



Attention HART Riders!

Remember to request a stop at JPCC when traveling Southbound to Social Services. The driver will stop at the front entrance.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Family and Children



NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS:

Two great FREE programs! **Rock Painting** on Saturday 4/17 from 10am – 2pm at John Pettibone Community Center. Paint positive messages on rocks and place around town!

“Just Breathe” Yoga Group for Girls!™: Four Mondays after school starting 4/23 for SNIS girls (come on Family Firsters! Andrea would be so proud!). Bus right over. For these two programs contact Debra at debra@youthagency.org or 860-210-2030.

Open Gym Time for High School Hoops!: Every Friday at JPCC gym, after school until 5pm. FREE and open to any high school student.

Homework Club: Students from grades 3rd-7th can receive FREE tutoring from high school student mentors. For more information on these programs, contact Jason at Jason@youthagency.org or 860-210-2030.

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.



Financial Tip of the Month

...continued...

Eversource, which ends May 1. It's time to face this and try for a payment plan. **NewStart** will let the whole back balance be forgiven in exchange for 12 payments that average your yearly electric costs. It's a great deal, but the time for action is NOW! Call Credit and Collection at 800-286-5844 to set this up. If you need help getting started call our office.

3. **Review your spending:** look at where the money goes by reading your bank statement and credit card bills for needs vs. wants OR simply collect receipts for every purchase you make for 2-4 weeks and then take a good look at them. See if anything surprises you . . . then create a couple of “rules to live by” to get yourself on track.

4. **Save automatically:** can you find one or two ways to boost savings now? Setting something up by payroll withdrawal or auto transfer increases the chance to succeed. Designate a saving spot and try. You're worth it!!

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



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 23- 27, 2018. 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, camps, 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.



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 23th, 2018. 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. Also, remember that the **American Job Center** comes to New Milford on the last Wednesday of each month; 4pm-6:30pm. Call NM Adult Ed Dept. for more info: 860-350-6647 x1170.



TBICO:

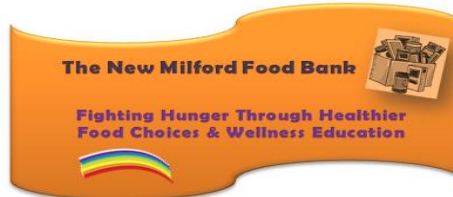
in Danbury, provides a range of FREE employment-related services, business training, and financial education for individuals seeking to become economically stable and self-sufficient. TBICO provides six week training sessions, ongoing support, and learning opportunities which help students achieve job readiness, personal and career growth, and ultimately, independence. Upcoming programs include Job Search Team, Wednesdays 10 - 11:30am; Keyboarding Classes: 9 classes total; new classes start on Wednesdays; Microsoft Word Basics on 3/22 & 3/23, One-on-One Budget Coaching and more. For details contact TBICO at [203-743-6695](tel:203-743-6695) or go to www.tbicoworks.org.

FOOD BANK:

Every **THURSDAY**
from 9am-4pm.

[This is a residency-income eligible program: pre-registration required]

Please bring in your own reusable bags!!



APRIL 2018						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

SPECIAL NOTE:
FOOD BANK CLOSES WHEN NEW MILFORD SCHOOLS CLOSE IN SEVERE WEATHER



NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:

Enjoy your spring and these easy to prepare nutritional meals



Egg, Ham and Spinach Pizza

Ingredients

- 1 store-bought baked thin-crust pizza shell, preferably whole-wheat, such as Boboli
- 4 cups (about 4 ounces) baby spinach leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 3 ounces prosciutto di Parma, thinly sliced **or ham***
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan (1 1/2 ounces)
- 3 cloves thinly sliced garlic
- 4 eggs



Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Place the pizza shell on a cookie sheet. Scatter spinach all over crust. Drizzle with oil. Evenly distribute **ham or*** prosciutto, Parmesan and garlic on top of spinach. Crack eggs onto pizza, roughly positioning 1 yolk on each pizza quarter. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until spinach is wilted and egg whites are just fully cooked. Cut into 4 large slices.

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*substitution added for this article

Vegetarian Brown Rice Casserole

Ingredients

Serves 4: Gluten free, nut free, vegetarian, main dish or side dish

- » 1 can (19 oz) ready-to-serve lentil soup
- » 1 package (about 9 oz) ready-to-serve brown rice
- » 1 can (7.75 oz) unsalted mixed vegetables, drained
- » 1 large or 2 small canned roasted red peppers, diced
- » 1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided

Preparation

- » Combine soup, rice, mixed vegetables, peppers and 6 tablespoons of the cheddar cheese in a 2-quart, microwave-safe casserole or baking dish.
- » Season with salt and pepper to taste, and level the top of the mixture.
- » Sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons cheddar cheese.
- » Cover and cook in a microwave oven at full power until heated through and the cheese on top melts, about 5 minutes.
- » Uncover and cool for 1 minute before serving.

Recipe by Canned Food Alliance

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY:

WEDNESDAY, Apr 4 and May 2; 5:30pm-6:30pm at the parking lot of Faith Church

No holiday closings this month

PERMIT NO. 10

PREPOST STANDARD
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