



## FEBRUARY 2017

Greetings from Peg Molina:

### Contents:

- Financial Tip pg. 1
- Program Updates pg. 2
- Community Resources pg. 3
- FB Hours & Recipes pg. 4

### Special points of interest:

- **Page 1:** "Behind *New* on Bills" workbook & workshop!
- **Page 2:** Info for Tax Filers
- **Page 2:** Parent ...Again support group
- **Page 2:** Help filing for SNAP
- **Page 2:** Affordable housing info
- **Page 3:** Resources for families/teens
- **Page 3:** Local Counseling services
- **Page 4:** Food Bank hours & recipes
- **Page 4:** Holiday schedule



40 Main Street  
 New Milford, CT 06776  
 (P) 860-355-6079  
 (F) 860-355-6019

Email: [socialservices@newmilford.org](mailto:socialservices@newmilford.org)  
 Website: [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org)

New Milford Social Services

New Year Resolutions

1. Exercise ~~30~~<sup>10</sup> minutes a day  
THINK ABOUT ~~20~~<sup>5</sup> seconds
2. Lose ~~30~~<sup>5</sup> pounds ounces
3. Eat more vegetables <sup>salad lettuce</sup> today
4. Watch less TV. <sup>movies</sup> ~~youtube~~

So, did you set any new resolutions for 2017?

And how's that going for you?! If you're like most of us, maybe not so hot. We start the year with a list of inspired ideas, and then . . . well, as they say, life gets in the way. I would like to start off by saying that change is hard, in fact, it's incredibly hard. Couple that with crummy weather or financial hardship and most people just want to crawl under the covers and say, "forget it!"

Yet, there are a few really useful things one can do to reach those goals after all. For starters, if the laundry list approach has been too daunting, dial it back to one or maybe two things—the very most important one or two. The desire to change *has to matter to you* (not your mother/spouse/boss, etc.) for it to work. Once you have your most important goal set, make sure it's realistic: lose 20 lbs. in one month? Save \$50 a week? Maybe it's better to scale it down a bit—rather than scrap the whole thing, revise it, make it more attainable. Then, make a plan for meeting your goal today. That's it—just for today. For me, getting something out of the way early in the day (i.e. exercise, a work assignment) always helps. Changing your eating or spending habits requires more fortitude throughout the day, but just start with today. Pack a lunch and drive right by that take-out store! Once you pass that hurdle, pat yourself on the back and know that you can succeed tomorrow too! Tell yourself that every successful day is like a mini-goal accomplished. It may help to find a fan club to cheer you on: this could be family, co-workers, friends—whoever your most supportive folks are. First of all, telling them your goal makes you go public with it and holds you accountable in a different way. Second, their support gives you strength. We will happily cheer you on here if you need a fan club!

So good luck with your one, reasonable goal. You can do it! And if you fall off track, no worries—try again tomorrow!

Peg



## Issue 2.2017



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.



### Financial Tip of the Month:

#### Behind on Bills?

Especially at this time of year, many people are in this boat. The extra spending of December combined with cutbacks in hours, or less available work due to the weather can really mess with a budget!



#### Guess What?

We have a wonderful tool to help! There is a terrific little work book called "Behind on Bills" is now available at Social Services. The tools are designed to help you handle money emergencies, cut down on stress from mounting bills and build your finances to where you want them to be. We would like to offer a two-part workshop to help local residents use this tool.

It may just be the best thing you can do for your financial and mental health this year!

...Continued Page 3.

# PROGRAM UPDATES:



**ENERGY ASSISTANCE:** Social Services is taking applications for all forms of heat. Fuel deliveries can be covered if approved before March 15<sup>th</sup>, and those with electric heat must apply before April 30<sup>th</sup> to maintain the Matching Payment Program.

If your household income is below the following amounts, you may qualify for energy assistance:

<u>Family size:</u>					
1	2	3	4	5	6
33,880.	44,305.	54,730.	65,155	75,580.	86,004.

Visit our department on the [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org) website, or come to the office for the list of documents needed to apply. All applicants are asked to bring a current electric bill.

**Please have ALL paperwork at the time of your appointment.** This includes pay stubs even if your employer has gone “paperless”. They can help you to get these. Likewise with Direct Express cards and bank statements: you can print full statements online as they must have both your name and your bank’s name. You cannot be approved without all needed documents!

**Clean, Tune and Test:** Upon request, funds will be provided to eligible households to cover the cost of a clean, tune and test of their household’s deliverable fuel heating system. Renters must receive written landlord permission and funds will not be taken from the fuel benefit. This is a great way to increase the efficiency of your fuel use!

**NEW EVERSOURCE POLICY:** Eversource has started to provide monthly reports of bill payments to Experian, a credit bureau. This means that **how you handle this bill will impact your credit score, good or bad.** People on budget plans, paid on time will be reported as “paid as agreed”. If the bill becomes 93 days in arrears, the account will be reported as delinquent and could damage your credit score.

Eversource hopes this will encourage timely payment of utility bills. We know that some financially stressed households have to choose which bills they can afford to pay. If you find yourself in this situation please contact our office so that we can help you get onto a payment plan with Eversource. We also want to document all such cases as they will be evaluating this new practice after one year.



**FORECLOSURE PREVENTION CLINICS:** get free legal advice and guidance from the CT Fair Housing Center. Next clinic is on February 15, 6:00 p.m. in Norwalk City Hall, 125 East Avenue, Room 231. More info: 860-263-0731.



**VILLAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS:** scholarships available for kids of all ages in need of help with school assigned art projects! Youths can go to VCA, get some guidance and complete their project, using materials supplied by VCA. Parents are involved for young children, or may leave their older child there and pick them up once the masterpiece is complete. (sounds like a dream come true!) In addition, Family Art is a wonderful multi-visit opportunity for the family to have some electronics-free quality time together creating art work. Call our office for a referral, then contact Jayson at [jayson@villagecenterarts.com](mailto:jayson@villagecenterarts.com) or call 860-354-4318.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE!:

**Barton Commons** is a 38 unit apartment complex renting units next to CVS on East Street. Hallkeen Property Management is leasing up this project featuring studio, one and two bedroom units at varying income levels. For more info and to receive an application contact Adam Goldberg at 203-546-7342 or visit the property. There is a \$100 refundable application fee (bank check or money order).



## IMPORTANT INFO FOR TAX FILERS:

A new law requires the IRS to hold refunds until mid-February in 2017 for people claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Additional Child Tax Credit. In addition, new identity theft and refund fraud safeguards put in place by the IRS and the states may mean some tax returns and refunds face additional review. Taxpayers should file as usual. Even though the IRS cannot issue refunds for some early filers until at least Feb. 15, the IRS reminds taxpayers that most refunds will be issued within the normal timeframe: less than 21 days, after being accepted for processing by the IRS. The [Where's My Refund?](#) tool on IRS.gov and the [IRS2Go](#) phone app remains the best way to get this status of a refund.



## VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE:

Now is the time to file for tax returns! **PLEASE be wise and use a VITA site to file your taxes for FREE this year!** The *NM Public Library* has VITA staff every Friday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and three sites in Danbury offer day and evening appointments: *Community Action Agency of Western CT*, 203-744-4700; *Western CT State University*, 203-797-4500; and *Danbury VITA*, 203-826-9517 (also scheduling NMPL appts). With electronic filing and depositing, you will not wait longer for a return through one of these agencies, and **ALL** of the money is yours! Call soon!!



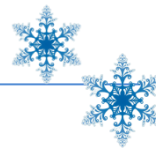
## GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN:

The next meeting of New Milford’s “When You’re a Parent . . . Again” info and support group will be on **Thursday, February 9th @ 5:30p.m. to 7p.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. **\*\*NOTE NEW DAY AND PLACE!\*\***



**SNAP OUTREACH THIS MONTH:** CT Institute for Families SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Outreach Worker, Sara Arroyo, will be here on Wednesdays, February 8<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



## Family and Children



**CT CHILDREN'S LAW LINE:** The [CT Children's Law Line](#) helps callers understand the legal processes involving children, including custody, visitation, guardianship, abuse, and neglect. The Law Line can also refer callers to other agencies for help. You can call this free service as many times as you need. Click [here](#) for more information. **Where:** 1-888-LAW-DOOR (529-3667)



### NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS:

**Homework club** is available for more children at this time. NMHS mentors will work with your child on math, reading, studying, organizing, and more! Both work and play on Saturday mornings. The program is open to area 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders, FREE. For more information, please call the Youth Agency at 860-210-2030 or email Jason at [Jason@youthagency.org](mailto:Jason@youthagency.org).



**Summer jobs and volunteering:** The YA is currently accepting applications for seasonal work open to area students. Applicants must be reliable, team-oriented, and hold qualities seen in a good role model. Available positions include: work at Sullivan Farm, Trail Crew, catering at The Maxx, and child care. Volunteer opportunities are also available in local community events as well as Youth Agency sponsored programs. Fill out an application at our office, 50 East Street, or go to [www.youthagency.org](http://www.youthagency.org) for more info.



**HEAD START** currently has openings for children ages 3 and 4 for their **pre-school programs** held at Hill and Plain Schools. Please contact Rebecca Litz to discuss income eligibility and for other info on this great early education program. 860-304-4648 ; [litz@educationconnection.org](mailto:litz@educationconnection.org)



### FINANCIAL HELP FOR COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS:

Did you know that students who qualify for free or reduced lunch can have SAT/ACT fees as well as some college application fees waived? Contact your guidance counselor for the details! [www.collegereadiness.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegereadiness.collegeboard.org)



## *Financial Tip of the Month...continued...*

The workshops will be offered on Wednesdays, March 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. If you are available during the day, register for 1pm – 2:30pm. If you need a later time, please call the office and we will arrange a late afternoon or early evening series. A minimum of six people is needed to run each group. Call our office to participate in this wonderful, free opportunity!

*...If you missed any of our previous tips, link in to social services/financial fitness on our town's website at [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org).*

*Happy Valentine's Day*



## Counseling Resources

**GREENWOODS COUNSELING REFERRALS:** If you would like to enter into counseling for a problem, life transition or other issue in your life, Greenwoods is a great place to start. They offer a free clinical assessment (which can take place in New Milford) and then you will be provided with three local therapists qualified to help you. If you lack insurance, Greenwoods can help cover the fees. If you have insurance, Greenwoods will find a therapist who accepts yours. Start by calling them at 860-567-4437; you'll be given a timely appt!

**THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF GREATER DANBURY:** offers free, confidential counseling and a number of support groups including "Women Thriving" to help women focus on sustaining positive changes after leaving unhealthy relationships. Weekly groups are offered in their Danbury office. For more info call 203-731-5200.

### FAMILY & CHILDREN'S AID:

NM office offers many services for parents & children: groups, counseling, home visits & more; free or insurance-based. For info or an appointment call 860-354-8556.

**INTERFACE** is a private practice located in the annex of the First Congregational Church. In addition there are other private practitioners who accept HUSKY and Medicare. Call one of our social workers to discuss these options.

**NEW MILFORD HOSPITAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FOR INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP THERAPY:** Located at 23 Poplar St., NMHBH provides mental health services for adults, including psychiatric assessment, med. management, individual and group therapy. You do not need to be a client of the clinic in order to join a group. Groups starting soon or on-going are: **Women's Support**—Wednesdays 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. for women to share their commonalities and isolation. Women can share how events in their lives are affecting them, receive support and feedback about ways to cope effectively. **Anxiety and Depression:** Tuesdays, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. Members learn coping skills and give support to each other. Most clients have major depression, dysthymia or anxiety disorder. Group is co-ed. **DBT/Dialectical Behavioral Therapy:** Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. A skills oriented class to help clients regulate their emotions. Each week a new skill is taught. Units covered: mindfulness skills, distress tolerance, emotional regulation and interpersonal effectiveness. This group is a 24 week commitment and was developed for those with borderline personality disorder, but other diagnoses are accepted. If you are interested in any groups, you just need an assessment appointment first (be sure to mention that you are interested in a group!) Call NMHBH at 860-210-5350 for info or an appointment.



### 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.

**FOOD BANK HOURS:**

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

[This is a residency-income eligible registered program]

***Please bring in your own reusable bags!!***

**SPECIAL NOTE: FOOD BANK CLOSSES IN BAD WEATHER**

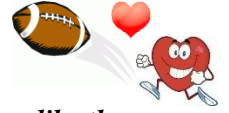
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				



**NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:**

*February is Heart Health Month!*

*Whether for Super Bowl Sunday or Valentine's Day- you can score high with your heart with recipes like these.*



**Guacomole Deviled Eggs**

- 9 large eggs
- 1 medium **avocado** (halved, pitted)
- 2 Tbsp fat-free **sour cream**
- 1 1/2 teaspoons **lime juice**
- 1/3 cup seeded and finely chopped Roma tomatoes (1 to 2 tomatoes)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped **scallions**
- 1/4 teaspoon **salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground **black pepper**
- 1 to 2 teaspoons finely chopped **jalapeno**
- Dried or fresh **cilantro**, to garnish (optional)



**Directions:** **1.** Make the hard-boiled eggs: Fill a large pot with water, add all the eggs, and bring mixture to a boil over high heat. As soon as the water begins to boil, cover with a lid, remove pot from the heat, and let eggs sit for 10 minutes. Drain water and

transfer eggs to a bowl of cold water to cool. **2.** When the eggs are cool enough to handle, remove the shells. Slice each egg in half lengthwise. Remove the yolks, adding just 2 whole egg yolks into a medium bowl and discarding the remaining 7 egg yolks (*Healthy tip: using just a couple of egg yolks versus all of them is a good way to reduce the saturated fat*). Place the egg white halves onto a platter. **3.** Slice the avocado in half and remove the pit. Use a spoon to scoop the avocado flesh into a bowl. Use a fork to mash the egg yolks and the avocado together. Stir in the sour cream and lime juice. **4.** Remove the seeds from the tomatoes with a spoon and discard (*Cooking tip: The seeds of the tomato are removed and discarded otherwise the liquid makes the guacamole too runny*); finely chop the tomato, along with finely chopping the scallions. Add both to the mashed avocado, along with salt, pepper, and optional jalapeno. Stir together to combine.

**5.** Spoon the guacamole into each egg white half, dividing the mixture between all 18. Garnish with a sprinkle of dried or fresh chopped cilantro, if desired. Serve. (*contributed by the American Heart Association's Simple Cooking with Heart Program.*)

**Apple Nachos**

- 1/3 cup dried, unsweetened cranberries or raisins
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds (unsalted)
- 2 Tbsp hulled, unsalted sunflower seeds
- 3 red or green apples, cored and thinly sliced into 12 pieces each
- 1-2 tsp lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp water
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat, smooth peanut butter
- 1 Tbsp honey



**Directions:** In a small bowl, combine dried fruit, almonds, sunflower seeds. Core each apple and thinly slice into 12 pieces each. Layer half the apples onto a large plate or platter. If the apple slices will be sitting out for a while, sprinkle a little lemon juice over them to prevent browning. Using the microwave or teapot, bring 2 Tbsp water to a boil. In a small bowl, combine hot water, peanut butter, and honey. Use a spoon and stir until mixture is smooth. Use the spoon to drizzle half the mixture over the apples slices; sprinkle with half the fruit/nut mixture. Layer the remaining apples on top & repeat with remaining mixtures. (*contributed by the American Heart Association's Simple Cooking with Heart Program.*)

***Our office will be CLOSED in observance of the following holidays:***

Monday, February 20, 2017 for Presidents' Day

PERMIT NO. 10  
NEW MILFORD CT 06776  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PRESORT STANDARD



660-355-6078  
NEW MILFORD SOCIAL SERVICES  
40 MAIN ST. 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR  
NEW MILFORD CT. 06776