



AGE FRIENDLY SACO

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Age Friendly Saco's mission "A Community for a Lifetime," is to promote active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, engagement, and safety, while removing barriers that prevent our citizens from remaining in their homes as they age. FMI contact Jean Saunders, Director.



June 2024 Newsletter
Community Matters!
Serving the community
of Saco since 2016

Consider joining us as a volunteer!
SHARE YOUR GIFT!

SPOTLIGHT: BARB WENTWORTH



Barb Wentworth is a longtime Saco resident and has been involved with Age Friendly Saco since its inception in 2016. She has served as a board member and is currently the President of the Board of Directors. Barb grew up in many places across the U. S. and lived in 8 states - spending summers in Maine or camping in many parts of the country prior to coming to Maine for college. Her three sons grew up in Saco and now the family includes three daughters-in-law, seven grandkids and three granddogs - all close enough to meet up often.

Her career covered decades of work in the nonprofit sector doing program, volunteer and board development, as well as lots of fundraising. Early on in her career, she started several volunteer programs that are still in operation today. Barb traveled the country and Canada sharing trainings on various topics and authored several articles and book chapters as part of that work. Her last role was as the former President & CEO of United Way of York County (now part of United Way of Southern Maine). After retiring from her day job, she left for new adventures supporting local nonprofits as a volunteer, consultant and grant writer. She enjoys history, traveling the world and learning about other cultures and hopes to visit every continent (only 2 left to go). Keeping in touch and spending time with family and friends, volunteering with several organizations, conquering jigsaw puzzles and sharing the great work of Age Friendly Saco provide Barb with many new adventures each day!"

Upcoming Community Luncheons

- June 20th * Tenderloin pork, roasted potato & apple sauce
- July 11th * Cheese burgers, potato salad, strawberry short cake
- Aug. 8th * Chicken, stuffing, cranberry sauce & dessert
- Sept. 19th * Menu to be determined
- Oct. 17th * Menu to be determined



The luncheons will be held at the Saco Elks Club 68 Ocean Park Rd, Saco.

As usual, the K-5 volunteers promise a delicious meal.

SACO SENIOR TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The application for the Property Tax savings program is due July 1 2024. Anyone who qualifies for the program is encouraged to get their application turned in to City Hall well before the deadline. Please remember to attach a COPY of your 1040ME form AND the PTFC/STFC form. It is important to sign your name anywhere (there is no line) on the top of the first page of both forms. Your signature is required in two places on the application form as well. If you have any questions about qualifying for the Saco Senior Tax Assistance program, or need help completing the application, please call Age Friendly Saco at 207-710-5029. Applications are available at City Hall or our office at 75 Franklin St., Saco

Maine Council on Aging recently awarded nearly \$376,000 in grants through **Hannaford Supermarkets' CHEF Program** to improve the well-being of older adults in New England and NY. More than 30 organizations in Maine received funding. AGE FRIENDLY SACO was fortunate to receive a grant which will help us operate more effectively and enabled us to offer various programs which recently included a crock pot cooking class. The goal of these classes is to assist those who want to cook for themselves using a crock pot. Our first "Crock Friendly" class was held on May 9th. Seven people attended the 90 minute class. Each class member received a free two-quart crock pot along with 3 take home meals which included Pot roast/potato vegetable.....Honey garlic chicken/vegetable.....Honey Dijon pork/vegetable. Samples of each meal were offered at the class along with "how to directions" and recipes for the meals. Our famous K5 volunteers prepared the meals and led the class. Thanks to Hillary Pride, RDN, LD Hannaford employee who served as the dietician advisor.

Good news... More Crock Pot classes are planned for the near future.



TELL US YOUR STORY

Thank you to those who have responded to our "Tell Us Your Story Campaign!"

We have received several wonderful stories. Here are a few we have received:

"As I grow older and live alone, I've noticed I have been in different situations where I need help. AFS has information on all sorts of Community services. In fact, if they don't have the solution, they will direct you to the place where you can get the help you need. Personally, I needed a grab bar in my bathroom for balance and security in getting in and out of the tub. Not only did the Handy Neighbor fellow install my grab bar beside the tub, he also put one along the back of the tub for me to hold onto. I am so grateful for this installation that takes care of my bathroom safety." Pat S.

"We have had Handy Neighbors come on several occasions to add railings to our basement and deck stairs, install smoke detectors, gutter guards and fix a small plumbing issue. In addition to this, the Technology Neighbors have helped us with a variety of issues that we were unable to resolve ourselves. Neither my husband nor I are able to climb ladders anymore and the assistance from Handy Neighbors will enable us to remain in our home for a longer period of time. The annual Wellness Fair always has a variety of very interesting, and helpful speakers offering a wealth of information regarding financial and health topics. In addition to the speakers, there are several vendors sharing information about their organizations and how they are beneficial to the aging community. Andy D.



SOPHIE SMITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I'm Sophie Smith, and I am so delighted to join Dyer Library / Saco Museum as the new Executive Director. Having spent time with my family in Saco for years, I am looking forward to building community and collaborations with all the wonderful local organizations—especially Age Friendly Saco.

I wanted to share a new service that we're developing—**Outreach Delivery**. For many with transportation or mobility issues, making a trip to Dyer Library may not be possible. But that doesn't mean you have to be without library books—we'll come to you instead! Reach us by phone at **207-283-3861** or email us at circ@dyerlibrarysacomuseum.org. We'll find out how we can help, whether it's bringing by a new best-seller or dropping off a few movies.

Have ideas about how the Library or Museum could do more to connect with the community and serve the needs of all our residents? Let me know! Stop by and visit or send me an email: ssmith@dyerlibrarysacomuseum.org.



TECH UPDATE - ALEXA

We will be continuing our Amazon Echo Dot program with the Echo Pop, a similar and smaller version of the Echo Dot. Like every other Echo device, the Echo Pop is driven by the Amazon Alexa voice assistant. Just say Alexa (or another chosen wake word) and give it a command. Alexa can play music, control compatible smart home devices, provide weather reports and sports scores, and even order products from Amazon.



Our next Lunch and Learn will be at Saco Parks and Recreation at 75 Franklin Street on July 10th, 2024 from 12-1pm. Lunch is provided and participants will receive a free Echo Pop to take home.

To register, please contact:

Email: parksandrec@sacomaine.org

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday 9:00am – 1:00pm

Phone: 207-283-3139 x801



Reaching out to our community.....

Did you know that quarterly Newsletters are sent out to 1500 residents and businesses?

1,042 residents have email. Approximately 465 are mailed to residents without access to emails, computers, etc.

Newsletters are often the only way we can reach out to our residents.

We welcome comments and suggestions for future AFS Newsletters.



Meet ..David Hamel, Saco Fire Department

David has been with the Saco Fire Department since 2003. In July, 2003, David was named Deputy Fire Chief in charge of the station's Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

The department established this position due to the EMS training needs and the large annual number of calls for services that are EMS related.

David has been a Nationally Registered Paramedic for 20 years. David shared that in 2023, the Saco Fire Department responded to 4,500 emergency calls, including 3,400 ambulance calls. The highest response frequency for emergency calls was 1,255 chronic medical calls and 573 falls. 54% of all ambulance responses were for people 60 and older.

Thank you, David and your staff for taking good care of the Saco residents.



Fall Information:

Falls in older adults can have devastating consequences, both physically and psychologically. The most common injuries resulting from falls include fractures, particularly of the hip, forearm, and spine, as well as head injuries and soft tissue injuries. These injuries can lead to hospitalization, surgery, long-term rehabilitation, and a loss of independence. Furthermore, the fear of falling can cause older adults to limit their activities and social engagement, leading to decreased mobility, functional decline, and an increased risk of depression and social isolation.



Fall Risk Factors.....

Understanding the risk factors associated with older adults is essential to effectively preventing falls in this population. Numerous natural and external factors contribute to the increased risk of falls in individuals aged 65 and older.

Natural Factors Include:

Age, Previous History of Falls, Balance Issues, Fear of Falling, Vision Issues

Chronic Medical Issues (Diabetes, Arthritis, Muscle Weakness etc.), Improper Medication Management, Postural Hypotension

External Factors Include:

Environmental Hazards, Uneven Surfaces, Poor Lighting, Slippery Floors, Obstacles in Walking Paths

What can be done.....

Simple changes in the home environment can significantly reduce the risk of falls among older adults.

Examples Include:

- Removing tripping hazards
- Installing grab bars and handrails
- Improving lighting
- Using non-slip mats
- Wearing proper footwear
- Slowly transitioning from a sitting to standing position.
- Review your medications annually with your Physician.
- Stay Active

Healthcare providers can educate older adults and their caregivers about creating a safe and conducive environment to prevent falls. In addition to individual interventions, community-based fall prevention programs and initiatives can significantly reduce falls among older adults. These programs may include fall risk screenings, educational workshops, and exercise classes tailored to the needs of older adults.

If you or a loved one experiences a fall, please do not hesitate to call 911 for immediate help, a medical evaluation, or transport to the hospital.

June 11 Election and important Bond Question

This year's State Primary, Municipal Budget Validation Referendum, and Special Referendum Election takes place on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, when the polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Thornton Academy's Linnell Gymnasium (438 Main Street). . Age Friendly Saco will provide transportation to the polls. To request a ride to the polls please call at least 24 hours before June 11th to request a ride please call: (207) 710-8527.

This year's ballot will include a bond referendum question. Further details on this bond referendum can be found below.

THE REFERENDUM JUNE 11

On June 11th the City of Saco will pose a referendum question to Saco taxpayers as to whether they want to fund 2 new schools in Saco- a Grade 1-5 school and a pre-K and Kindergarten school.

The proposed schools would be built on a plot between Mill Brook Road and Route 1. The new school buildings would replace Fairfield and Young schools (which currently house grades K-2), and C.K. Burns school (home to grades 3-5).

Pre-K is currently housed in leased space at the Toddle Inn.

Grade 1-5 School

The grade 1 through 5 school has a total cost of \$109.3 million dollars. The Grade 1-5 School is a state -subsidized project with 93% state subsidy or \$101.4 million dollars. The 7% which will be the responsibility of the citizens of Saco will be \$7.9 million dollars.

Pre-K - K School

The pre-k and kindergarten building is not state subsidized. It will cost \$31.4 million dollars which will entirely be the responsibility of the citizens of Saco.

THE COMBINED BALLOT QUESTION

The referendum ballot on June 11th will ask voters to approve both schools or none at all. Voters will not have the option of approving the construction of just one school as the City Council voted to approve one question only to support the construction of both schools.

For the construction of both schools the total obligation on local taxpayers will be an estimated \$39.3 million.

To better understand the impact on the mil rate, for a median assessed value of a single-family house which is \$412,000 after state reimbursements, the net effect on the tax rate would be \$.69. Using the median single-family house assessment of \$412,000 the net tax impact would be \$284 a year.

ABSENTEE VOTING

For those individuals who don't want to go to the polls, below is the link to the city website section pertaining to absentee ballots where it outlines several ways to request an absentee ballot. This year the state has a regular absentee ballot, where you request a ballot for each election, or you can do ongoing absentee ballots if you are going to be 65 before the next election or self-identify as having a disability. With the ongoing absentee ballot, ballots are mailed out for each state and municipal election. If the voter decides not to return the absentee ballots, but instead go to the polls, then their absentee ballot ongoing status is terminated, and they must reapply for future elections.

The last day to request or vote an in-person absentee ballot is Thursday, June 6, 2024, unless you have a special circumstance. On this day, the City Hall office will be open until 6:00 p.m. to accept absentee ballot requests and voter registration applications.

Need a ride to the State Primary Elections on June 11th?

(Saco will also have a referendum question on the ballot for new school construction.) The Age Friendly Saco Mobility Shuttle will be operating on Tuesday, June 11th exclusively to provide rides to Thornton Academy Linnell Gymnasium for voting in the State Primary Elections. If you need a ride, please contact the Saco Mobility Shuttle Scheduling Coordinator at (207) 710-8527 to schedule.

Deadline to schedule: Sunday, June 9th.

