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## COMMISSION ON AGING

TOWN HALL

DARIEN, CONNECTICUT 06820

Meeting: March 18, 2009.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM.

Present: Joseph Pankowski, Jennifer Geddes, Mary Giarratana, Norman Guimond, Ron Heinbaugh, Karen Joelson, Mary McCarthy, Pat Morgan, Robin Woods. Also in attendance: Linda Santarella.

The minutes of the February meeting were approved.

Ron Heinbaugh read the Senior Center report:

- The Wellness Program at the Center has been a huge success – around 15 to 20 in attendance weekly.
- I met with the Selectmen three weeks ago and believe all the questions asked by Mr. Seth Morton at the last Commission meeting were adequately answered.
- We were very pleased with our visit to Rocky Hill Veteran's Hospital on February 26<sup>th</sup>. They were so pleased with the Wei Games and six additional games. There are five separate units in the hospital – three were already outfitted with these games. Our additional two made it complete - - one for each unit.

While there, Nancy asked if there were any vets who had no outside contact. She received a list this week, of eight men – so she started a 'Pen Pal Program' for them. Several of the seniors at the center participated in this project.

- Joe Warren did a wonderful Talk and Slide Show on Birds at the Center on March 9<sup>th</sup>. The program was called 'Santa is for the Birds.'
- Joseph Pankowski will be presenting on behalf of the Commission on Aging, a program called, "Your House is a financial Asset, 'Not Just the

Place you Live.” Along with Anthony Homieki, Town Assessor of Darien; Stephen Lamoreaux, a Certified Reverse Mortgage Consultant; and of course, Joe Pankowski, chairman of Wills, Trusts & Probate Department of his law firm. This will be held on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. Questions and Answers will follow.

- On Monday March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Elaine Abrams from Nursing Services in Westport will talk on ‘Insomnia is not inevitable.’
- A new program started, called ‘Exercising with Arthritis.’ This is in association with the Arthritis Foundations Life Improvement Series. It will meet every Tuesday for 45 minutes.
- A group of Anna Klebanov’s Piano students gave a wonderful inspiring show. Anna is associated with the Fairfield Shubert Club. The eight children were from 8 to 15 in age.
- We’re working on a trip, ‘we’ meaning Karen Joelson and myself ( Nancy ), to take a trip to see ‘Around the World in 80 Days’ at the Westport Playhouse. It is still in the works. Thank You, Karen.
- This report was written after Joe Pankowski’s program. For the very limited publicity, I would say it was quite successful. I, myself was very pleased with the response.

Ron Heinbaugh read the Thursday / Friday Senior Center’s Report:

- The Wellness Program this month featured the following topics: ‘Stress & Weight Gain,’ ‘Good Fats and Bad Fats,’ ‘Grains, Health and Weight,’ ‘Healthy Mind and Body.’ Participants have given this program and the 2 instructor's high praise.
- Dates have now been firmed up for the trips with the New Canaan Senior Center into New York. The Museum of Modern Art is scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup> and the Botanical Gardens in the Bronx will be on May 12<sup>th</sup>. More info on the trips will follow.
- A new class in Pottery – ‘Play with Clay’ is starting this month. It will be a weekly beginner’s class in ceramics, led by potter Mark Covello. He holds a Master’s Degree in teaching, has studied privately and has spent 4 years at the Clay Art Center in Port Chester, N. Y. He has arranged to have participants pots fired off site in Stamford.
- . Susan Baroud, Education Coordinator of the Darien Historical Society will present a slide show and talk on historic Darien on the last Thursday of the month.
- Martin Scala, Senior Center member and financial correspondent, gave a talk on seniors’ financial concerns in this volatile economy. This entitled, ‘Investing Safely in the Economic Downturn.’

### Old Business:

- Karen Joelson discussed the Bulletin Board at the Library for keeping the public aware of things going on in Darien and Senior Center.
- Robin Woods spoke about the chairlift ramp into the gym. Ron Heinbaugh suggested having a 'fundraiser' for the chairlift – he will chair the fundraiser.
- Jennifer Geddes suggested giving passes to seniors for the bus to the beach. Suggestion was made to give a pass to a person if they have an out-of-town car. OOT cars are not allowed at the beach. It was also suggested having a pass with picture/photo on it.
- Karen Joelson suggested having trips to the theater whenever a show changes.

### New Business:

- Norman Guimond spoke about affordable housing for seniors. Discussed was a certain amount of units being set aside for seniors. Mentioned was a point system – for town workers, seniors, etc. Having a waiting list, a lottery system. Housing should be owner occupied , not rent occupied. More discussion will follow at future meetings.
- Linda Santarella on Budget request. Board of Selectmen approved \$26,000. Maintenance – Board of Selectmen approved \$5,000. Total approved - \$31,000.

Joe Pankowski suggested COA members writing one or more paragraphs on a 'Mission Statement' – it's purpose. He will look each one over and comment on them at the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Matteis.