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2015 All Aboard The Arc!
Partnerships



Affordable Care Act 2015 Open Enrollment

On November 15, 2014 open enrollment began for the Affordable Care Act and the enrollment process will end on February 15, 2015. Now is the time for individuals who are uninsured or looking for affordable health insurance to investigate the private health insurance plans available through state marketplaces. Individuals must enroll before December 15, 2014 in order to have coverage by January 1, 2015. During "open enrollment", a person can purchase private health insurance through the marketplace in each state.

Check out the health care website at <https://www.healthcare.gov/>. Individuals will be able to preview 2015 plans & prices before applying and learn ways to apply for Marketplace coverage. If you have 2014 coverage through the marketplace, you can review your current plan and log in to update your coverage information. Re-enrollment is an important opportunity for individuals to report any changes in income. Keep in mind there may be financial assistance available for low and moderate incomes to help with health care costs. Individuals who do not take action will be automatically re-enrolled in the current plan.

Winter Dance Schedules

Please RSVP to Pauline at 508-764-4085

January 16, 2015 - Friday 6 -9 p.m. CoH Day Hab

Price: \$7.00 Dinner and Dance, \$3.00 Dance Only

February 15, 2015 - Sunday 3 - 6 p.m. **Snow Ball Semi Formal Dance**
LaSalle Hall, Southbridge, MA

Price: \$15.00 Dinner and Dance, \$7.00 Dance Only

March 20, 2015 - Friday 6 -9 p.m. CoH Day Hab

Price: \$7.00 Dinner and Dance, \$3.00 Dance Only

Check out the new Winter items
at StyleImperatives.com!



WIRE WRAPPED
sterling silver &
14K Gold
SEMPRECIOS
earrings



Talents & Treasures Charity Auction Review

Friday night, November 14, 2014 the red carpet was rolled out and literally lit up with lights as our treasured supporters of the "Holiday Giving" fundraiser gathered at the Publick House Historical Inn located in Sturbridge. The auction itself has taken on a celebrity theme offering our many partnerships opportunities to be interviewed by the well known Worcester Bravehearts announcer Dave "Peterman" Peterson. Hollywood Stars adorned with individual names and company logos lined the pathways toward live and silent auction items. This years legends were **Angel Guard Products, Inc., Comcast Business 2 Business, Camosse Masonry Supply and The Hoyt Foundation.** Our Icons featured **Sadie Greens and Southbridge Savings Bank.** Many more celebrities consisted of **Hanover Insurance Group, HMEA, Protector Group Insurance Agency and Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center to name a few.**

Well known songs filled the air as Rob Adams entertained the audience by voice and guitar. A special guest, Rita Schiano, joined him in song for a few numbers as guests took advantage of cash and carry items at the Sadie Greens and Style Imperatives gift tables. Dinner was once again a fabulous assortment prepared and offered buffet style by the Publick House Historical Inn.

Auctioneer Rich Merrill worked the crowd by engaging and encouraging bidding wars between bidders on coveted items, even tossing out his own money to coax a bidder to bid \$10.00 or \$20.00 higher. New additions to the live auction items included tickets to see "Dirty Dancing" at Broadway in Boston on Saturday, May 9, 2015 and Hanover Theatre presented 6 box seat tickets to the Friday, December 26, 2015, 7 p.m. showing of "A Christmas Carol". Many of our seasoned supporters held out for the Swarovski's 2014 Annual Edition Christmas Ornament, scratch ticket tower and incredible vacation spots in North Conway, NH and Williamsburg, VA.

We would like to once again thank everyone in attendance and our many donation supporters for helping the Center raise money for our "Holiday Giving" program. Without your support, many families in need who are affiliated with the Center would not be blessed with gifts this holiday season.

2014 Gobble Gobble Road Race Review *by Ryan Thompson*

On November 23, 2014 the Center of Hope hosted its 9th Annual Gobble Gobble Road Race. This race included a 1 Mile Fun Run for youth in the community, as well as a 5K and 10K course option. This was our largest race to date with over 300 people registered for the 5/10K race and a little under 15 signed up for the fun run. We were able to raise over \$7,000.00 to help fund our ever growing Special Olympics Program. These funds help pay for uniforms, practice fees and sending athletes through to the State Game level.

Since the race's inception in 2005, Angel Guard Products Inc. has supported this event by being our Race Partner. We are so thankful to Mr. Cormier along with Angel Guard Products for his continued support over the years with this event. We would also like to thank our other sponsors Metal Craft Machine, Southbridge Tire and the Quinebaug Lodge AF&AM for seeing the good that comes out of this event.

We would also like to thank the Southbridge Police Department. The Police Department was a key part of the race and worked really hard to make sure that all the runners were safe while on the course, be it directing traffic on Main Street or following the last of the 10K runners onto Foster Street. The gratitude that we have for your assistance is huge.

Next year's Gobble Gobble Road Race will be held on Sunday, November 25, 2015. We look forward to this event and hope it will continue to grow each year.



What's New in Their Shoes?

(All content is given from Program heads & event/company websites)

Advocacy

Meets at CoHDH, 1 North Street, Southbridge, MA. **Monthly dues of \$3.00 is required at each meeting or \$25.00 annually. Limited transportation services provided.**

Building Bridges Self-Advocacy Group

First Tuesday of every month from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Dinner is provided.

Special Events Assisting families, individuals with disabilities and the community to understand and better utilize services. Save the Date!

The below dates will be held at CoH Day Hab, 1 North Street, Southbridge, MA from 6 - 6:30 p.m. pizza and snacks will be available and the presentation will be from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

January 6, 2015 - Alphabet Soup: DDS, CSC, AFC, PCA, SSI, SSDI, BENE Plan -

February 3, 2015 - Friendship presented by Mary Ann Brennan

March 3, 2015 - Housing: What are the options? Come discover resources! Presented by Ms. Nadworthy

Job Club Dinner Dance

Job Club hosted their first Dinner Dance of the year at 1 North Street, Southbridge, MA 01550 on December 12th from 6 - 9 p.m. Everyone had a wonderful time and the Job Club raised \$360.00 towards their annual July field trip.

Special Olympics Unified Basketball Season is here!

Tryouts for placement on our competitive unified teams will start on **Thursday, December 16th from 3 - 5 p.m. at Southbridge Community Center, 153 Chestnut Street, Southbridge, MA.** Unfortunately we will not be able to use Nichols College this season. Because there are so many teams this year we will have two practices a week, one during the day and one after hours (everyone will only go to one) held at the old Southbridge High School. After tryouts are complete a letter will go home letting you know what team you are on and which day you will be practicing on.

This year there are a few changes at the Special Olympics state level that will affect us. **#1 All athletes and unified partners will have to participate in at least two recreational games prior to the state games with their team. (Everyone must have transportation to and from the CoHF for these games.) #2 Not all athletes and partners are guaranteed to be picked to move on to the state games this year. There have been such a high number of teams that they are not able to accommodate them all at the hotels and venues. Additional information on the changes can be found at <http://specialolympicsma.org/presentation/basketball/>**

Staff and program members, please see Martin Dawson at 774-200-7289 or Ryan Thompson at 774-230-0440 to register for tryouts, as well as if you have any questions. The Center of Hope will provide transportation to the Community Center/High School, but ALL ATHLETES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR A RIDE HOME FROM PRACTICE.

Qualifiers: February 1st **State Games:** March 7 - 8th

You must be able to make it to the qualifiers, as well as state games to participate.



Family Support Trips

Providence Place Mall and Lunch for Last Minute Christmas Shopping!!

December 20, 2014 - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Cost: \$25.00

Price includes transportation and lunch. Join us for a fun filled day of shopping and bopping at Providence Place Mall. Great place for last minute shopping, lots of great stores! Good bargains and good times – Bring spending money and your Christmas shopping list. Everyone leaves full and happy, then back to some more shopping to work off those calories!

Sky Zone

Monday January 5, 2015

Cost: \$30.00



Price includes jump fee and dinner. Imagine a seemingly endless sea of trampolines, all connected to form one massive trampoline surface. Now, imagine that surface enclosed with angled trampolines that allow you to literally bounce off the walls! The first Monday of each month we will open for our jumpers with special needs. We will dial down the noise, increase the staff ratio and limit the capacity for the enjoyment our special guests. A signed waiver is required for all who participate. Meet at the Center of Hope at 3p.m. (program members can stay after program). We will jump for an hour and stop for dinner on the way home. Pickup is at the Center of Hope at 7:30 p.m.

Sharks Game

January 10, 2015

Cost: \$35.00



Price includes ticket to the games and dinner. Limited tickets, first come first serve!!!! Hockey fans come join together in cheering on our local Hockey Team– We will all meet at The Center of Hope Day Hab at 4:30pm. We will head to Papa Gino’s for Dinner then off to the game! We will arrive back at the Center at 11:00pm.

Ski Ward Snow Tubing, Shrewsbury, MA

January 24, 2015

Cost: \$45.00



Price includes entrance to tubing park and lunch. Don’t forget your hat and mittens for this fun day in the snow. Tubing is the perfect activity for all levels and with up to 8 lanes, 2 lifts and over 200 tubes at Ski Ward in Shrewsbury, MA, you’re guaranteed to have a great time! Please wear weather appropriate clothing including, hat, gloves, snow pants, jacket and snow boots. Everyone will leave at 9 a.m. on Saturday from COH Day Hab, and enjoy a lunch at the Chinese Buffet, then return at 4 p.m.

Movies & Shopping @ Blackstone Valley Shops

February 7, 2015

Cost: \$30.00



Price includes Movie tickets and lunch. Shopping, lunch and movies, who could ask for more? Come hang out with your friends while enjoying a day to shop at the Blackstone Valley Shops, have lunch at Red Robin and see a movie. Meeting at the Center of Hope at 9 a.m. and returning at 4:30 p.m.

Sharks Game

February 27, 2015

Cost: \$35.00



Price includes ticket to the games and dinner. Limited tickets, first come first serve!!!! Hockey fans come join together in cheering on our local Hockey Team– We will all meet at The Center of Hope Day Hab at 4:30pm. We will head to Papa Gino’s for Dinner then off to the game! We will arrive back at the Center at 11:00pm.

Southbridge Day Hab

Throughout the month of December, we have been taking shopping trips for presents at Family Dollar, Michael's craft store and Walmart. On December 19, 2014 we attended the agency's Christmas party and everyone had a wonderful time eating, dancing and singing along to holiday music. Santa Claus came and spent the day with us while we passed out gifts and listened to carols at our annual Christmas party on December 24, 2014. The following names Josh Velasquez, Sara Israelson, Kristal Santa, Rose Collins, Roger Hodgkins and Renee Proulx were picked out of a hat and we thanked them for their hard work by providing them with holiday cookie baskets that we baked in our kitchen workshops.

On January 8th at 12:30 p.m. the talented country singer/songwriter Cameron Sutphin will be performing for us. Cameron is a Connecticut based artist and has visited us many times. Later in the month we will be going to the movies and Bay Berry Bowling Alley in Spencer. Bayberry Bowling Center has sixteen candlepin bowling lanes, a complete arcade with tickets and prizes, and an eight table pool room. Did you know Bayberry was the first candlepin bowling center in Massachusetts to incorporate automatic scoring? There will be no cheating on your score card here! Some of the other renovations that have happened in the years are two twelve foot projection televisions to watch your favorite sports teams. Plus, there is a video camera that allows bowlers to watch their individual bowling style! How cool is that?!

The EcoTarium in Worcester is also a favorite trip and we will be scheduling a day to go and see the new exhibits. You may purchase your lunch there or plan ahead and bring your lunch with you.

*The EcoTarium offers hands-on, interactive exhibits that explore the natural and physical sciences unique to our New England environment. Each year, the museum welcomes dynamic traveling exhibits, as well as permanent installations that make creative use of the museum's natural history collection and living wildlife. You'll also encounter a wide variety of animals, from otters to chinchillas to bald eagles. You'll meet some of them face to face during our public programs and visit others while they swim, relax and play in their habitats. Some animals, like wild turkeys, are living on their own within the museum grounds. You never know which animals you might see on a visit to the EcoTarium!**

Featured Exhibits (*content directly taken from website)

The Arctic Next Door: Mount Washington*

The Arctic Next Door takes visitors on a virtual journey to explore the weather and geology of Mount Washington.

DinoTracks*

Discover what was happening in your backyard -- and who was there -- during the Jurassic period!

Nature Explore® Outdoor Exhibit*

EcoTarium's newest interactive outdoor exhibit features several play areas, each with its own theme. Each area offers unique and innovative outdoor experiences designed to engage children and their families through activities such as building, digging, nature art, climbing, music and movement.

Also our friend Jeannine Spink has arranged a day for us to visit and tour the Fire House in CT again.

For the month of February we will be making chocolate cup cakes and other treats for our Valentine's Day Party and taking trips to the Auburn Mall, Dunkin Donuts and Kiwi Frozen Yogurt in Sturbridge.

CoH Day Hab

We have made it through to a new year and while 2014 may have offered us challenges we believe we have overcome them all gracefully and came out on top as always. Over the past year we have been on many fun and exciting trips. We have visited museums, concert halls, gardens, farms, as well as eating at some great restaurants and shopping at our favorite stores.

The Christmas Holiday has come and gone and we are all still glowing. We enjoyed a few extra scheduled days off and even maybe a gift or two. Last month we enjoyed some of our yearly trips to Mechanics Hall to listen to wonderful music for their annual Brown Bag Lunch Series. We also finished up all of our Holiday Shopping at stores around the area and ate food at our favorite places.

In the year to come we will re-visit many of our old favorites and possibly find new adventures. This month we will be enjoying trips out to eat at places like Uno's Restaurant, Subway and Dunkin Donuts. We will also be going shopping at our local hot spots like Walmart, Michaels, Ocean State Job Lot and Sadie Greens.

The week of January 12 - 16th we will be hosting our very first Bottle and Can Drive to raise funds for our State wide advocacy fundraiser All Aboard The Arc! We would love for you to send in all of the left over recyclable bottles and cans you have so we can turn them into cold hard cash for a good cause.

Engage In the Community

MFOFC The Central Region of Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change is hosting a **Free Family Leadership Series on Friday/Saturday: January 23 & 24, 2015 at Wachusett Village Inn, 9 Village Inn Road, Westminister, MA 01473.** Applications from families with children or adult family members of any age who are Department of Developmental Services (DDS) eligible are encouraged to apply.*

The Family Leadership Series is organized into three, two-day workshops and participants are required to attend all three sessions focusing on [Initiative and Leadership](#) – family members are given information on the background of the family support movement, leadership, advocacy and the significance of self-advocacy, how to effectively advocate for change and ways to influence funding and delivery systems. [Creating A Vision](#) – families are supported to “imagine better” and to create a vision, with and for their family members, that guides their leadership and advocacy. What advocacy is necessary to ensure the visions that are developed and what is effective advocacy? [Policy Making at the Local, State and Federal Level](#) – family members receive information on how to develop networks with professionals and families, how to access and control resources that affect family stress and satisfaction and how to use legislative change to procure resources. Food and overnight lodging for participants is paid for by the Department of Developmental Services, area organizations and businesses.

Families who attend the series are required to do the following:

1. To attend all three sessions, Fri/Sat (2) day sessions (staying overnight at the hotel).
2. To participate in activities/experiences during the sessions and to complete assignments/reading between each session.
3. Commit to reach out to their legislators about their need for family support and tell their personal story to their elected officials.

***Applications must be returned by December 15, 2014** to Jennifer O'Leary, Central Family Leadership Coordinator at 14 Boeske Avenue, Maynard, MA 01754. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and you will be notified within approximately three weeks. Applications are also available by email. Please note that submitting an application does not ensure acceptance. Upon acceptance, you will receive a confirmation letter.

Easter Seals Youth Leadership Network

Copied from an email update

Easter Seals Youth Leadership Network (YLN) invites young people with disabilities to join others and participate in group projects, activities, and discussions, designed to help prepare youth to transition from high school to adulthood. If you are a young person with a disability between the ages of 14-26, and you plan to attend an upcoming YLN meeting please complete this survey so that we can learn more about the goals you have for the future. <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1855201/Easter-Seals-Massachusetts-YLN-Survey>

The Worcester YLN meeting will be on the following Saturdays, **January 10, 2015 and February 14, 2015 from 1 - 3:00 p.m. located at Easter Seals Worcester Office, 484 Main Street, Worcester 01608.** January's meeting will focus on advocacy, community service, and recreation. Come this month to help plan what the YLN will do in 2015! Parents are also invited to stay for a parent group, covering topics related to transition services and program for youth with special needs. Please **RSVP** if you plan to attend at youth@eastersealsma.org or calling **Desi Forte** at **617-226-2855**. Check them out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EasterSealsYouth.

Home Fire Safety Tips Info given by Sharon Doyen, CoHF Staff Trainer

During this time of season, more homes are using additional heating sources such as space heaters, pellet stoves, fireplaces and on a smaller scale electric blankets. Inside and outside you will see an array of decorative items glowing brightly. It is a wonderful time to share with family and friends but the increased demand on electrical outlets and the use of chimneys could be very dangerous.

Fires in a home are a serious matter that can cause serious and permanent damage, but there are many ways of preventing them. First off, ALWAYS have working smoke detectors in and all around your household. A fire can start anywhere and at any time, even when you're sleeping. To make sure they are working you should check them every few months by pushing the test button, change batteries and replace them after a year or two. It is also a good idea to have a fire extinguisher and a CO2 detector around.

Water and electricity are not friends. Stoves and fireplaces should also be inspected and cleaned before every seasons use. Make sure you check the wiring of lights for fraying cords before dressing trees, garland or windows. Space heaters should never be left unattended and it is very important to keep away from fabrics or other electronics where the heat could create an issue. Electric blankets are wonderful to take the chill off your sheets before bed but should never stay on throughout the night. Always shut them off before you climb in to ensure there will not be an issue. Also recently there have been You Tube videos of phones plugged in to charge that people place under their pillow or in the bed with them that have caught on fire. Have you ever noticed your phone grow hot while using it or while charging? Make sure to set it aside on a surface that the heat will not effect it and keep it out from under your pillow.

Doing all these things can really help stop a disaster, but accidents do happen, so BE PREPARED. Plan escape routes for you and your family by finding at least two ways to escape each room in your home. Even consider an escape ladder. Create a meeting spot outside and practice at least twice a year. You can never be too prepared. In a real life situation make sure everyone is out of the house and find a way to call the fire department. If you are stuck inside during a fire, try to find the safest way out. If all ways of escaping are blocked, do not move. Try signing for help by using bright colored clothing or a light to get attention in front of a window.

Always stay safe and always stay prepared, especially during the holiday season.



Center of Hope Foundation

P.O. Box 66
100 Foster Street
Southbridge, MA 01550
Formerly known as SWCARC

COHF Viridian Update

Merry Christmas ... Santa says his ride will be easier this year since fewer smoke stacks are generating electricity because of Viridian customers. (Are you one yet?)

You're Welcome ... many notes and calls have come in thanking the Center after becoming a Viridian customer. Depending on the date of switching the comments are between something like "My bill actually went down at the same time my neighbors' are screaming about the increases.", to "I didn't know how I was going to handle a bigger electric bill than I was getting, this I can handle and the same rate for 3 years is comforting and the guaranty is nice too".

Thank You ... \$5000.00 worth and counting. Because of the Viridian customers who have been brought to the Viridian company through the COHF and the individuals who signed up as associates underneath us, Viridian has paid us just about \$5000 to date and they continue to pay us monthly.

REALLY? And there's more?... We as one of our own customers have saved approximately \$25,000 since putting our meters on with Viridian! One of our Staff among us signed up with Solar City through Viridian for his Solar system and is about to embark on 20 yrs of saving AND 20 years of monthly contributions to the COH at the same time. It's never to late to join in for 2015.



The Center of Hope has started another great small business called Hope Sweet Hope. For the past few months you have been able to sample a variety of rich fudge and warm cinnamon roasted nuts at Books and Beans Coffee shop. Now you can also find them in the Sadie Green's Emporium Bead Shop located at 320 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA along with gourmet candy and assorted holiday theme candy and gift baskets.