



At Home in Darien

Helping Darien seniors live independently, comfortably and with dignity in their own homes and the community as long as possible

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OUT AND ABOUT

WINTER 2013

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Wonderful Winter



Dear Friends –

Winter is in full force. The season slows us down a bit which allows for some excellent opportunities. It truly is a wonderful time of year and we've dedicated this issue to making it joyous.

We hope the articles in this issue will give you a few terrific ideas for making the most of the rest of the season.

This fall **Aging in Place+Gallivant** hosted in collaboration with the **Darien Community Association** our Annual Luncheon with a focus on getting organized. Get a jumpstart on your spring cleaning and make some time now to remove clutter from your home. If you missed the luncheon, give us a call and we'll share a synopsis and some tips to get you started. And if you need even more help, we can make a referral to one of our vetted service providers.

At our Annual Meeting we welcomed the newest members of our Board of Directors, William Ball, Diane Barston, Cindy Heck, and Cathy Sullivan, and thanked our outgoing Board member Charles Siedler and our President Dorothy Baker for all they have done to shape our organization into the great resource it has become for Darien seniors, their families and friends.

Keep **Aging in Place+Gallivant** in mind for yourself, your loved ones, friends and neighbors. Winter can also be a lonely and difficult time of the year. We urge you to take advantage of our free services. We have friendly volunteers who are willing and able to help with home visits, grocery shopping, and small tasks in and about the home. And if you have to go out, call upon us for a friendly volunteer driver or the Gallivant driving services.

We are here for you – give us a call!

All the best,

Gina

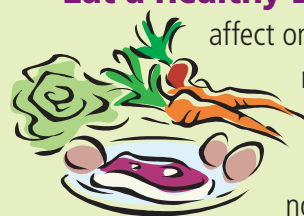
Gina Z. Blum, Executive Director, Aging in Place+Gallivant

Keep Happy this Winter

• **Exercise** It's not only for maintaining your weight and staying healthy, but it relieves the stresses of life. You'll have more energy throughout the day, and it also helps your mind by releasing those "feel good chemicals" that improve your mood.



• **Eat a Healthy Diet** What you eat has a great affect on your mood and energy. Avoid refined and processed foods (like white breads, rice, and sugar). These foods are not only devoid of nutrients,



but they zap your energy levels and can affect your mood—causing depression, lack of concentration, and mood swings. Try to incorporate more complex carbohydrates (whole wheat breads, brown rice, veggies, fruit) and get your daily 8 cups of water. These healthy foods provide your body (and mind) with nutrients, and stabilize your blood sugar and your energy levels.

• **Get Some Sun** Winter days are shorter and darker than other months, and because of the cold weather, a lot of people spend less and less time outdoors. Lack of sunlight can cause many people to become depressed—without knowing why! Similar to exercise, sunlight exposure releases neurotransmitters in the brain that affect mood. Try to spend a little more time outdoors. Keep your shades up during the day to let more light in and sit near windows whenever possible.



• **Treat Yourself** Having something to look forward to can keep anyone motivated. Winter seems endless! But if you plan something exciting, your mood improves when you're anticipating it and when the event actually comes. Plan something that's exciting to you—a weekend trip, a



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At Home in Darien

"Helping Seniors get around – what could be more rewarding?"

Ben Smith,
Volunteer Driver

Our flexible volunteers drive Seniors to and from medical appointments outside the times or locations served by Gallivant.

Call Gina Blum at **203.585.4094**
director@aginginplacegallivant.org

Aging in Place+Gallivant is nonprofit, tax-exempt, and supported by generous donations.

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Fight Cabin FEVER: Get Out and Get Going — and Home will be a Happier Destination!

Darien Senior Activities Center



The more you keep active and socialize with others during the Winter months, the happier you will be in the evening when it gets dark earlier, and more bearable will be the days you get stuck in due to poor weather. The **Senior Center** offers a full calendar of events to keep your body, mind, and spirit fully engaged for those long cold months.

• **Take an exercise class or two per week, try:** Yoga, Pilates, Zumba, Qigong, Ballet, Stretch Tone and Balance, and even a couple of sitting classes...or perhaps you would like to get in shape with a rousing game of Pickle Ball or Wii Bowling.

• **If creative pursuits are more to your liking why not try:** Stained Glass, Water Colors, Oil and Acrylic painting, Stone Carving, Crafting Classes, Knitting, Crocheting, Quilting or Needlepoint.

• **There also great classes to participate in:** Short Story Discussion, Global Studies, Writing, Spanish, Italian and French Conversation.

• **Keep your mind active** with Bingo, Mahjong, Pinochle, Bridge and other assorted games.

• **Each month** there are different musical entertainments and theme days.

• **And there's also a wonderful hot lunch program** that is always nutritious and delicious.

After a full day of activities, enrichment, and fun, going to the quiet, cozy environment you call home is not only satisfying but welcomed. So get out there and connect with your community and before you know it – it will be SPRING! For more information contact the **Darien Senior Activities Center** at 203-656-7455

Keeping Warm and Safe at Home Requires Some Attention

Elaine Abrams, MPH, RN, CHES is the Community Health Coordinator at Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County in Norwalk CT, and President-Elect of the Connecticut Public Health Association.

Keeping yourself and your loved ones out of harm's way is high priority, but there are hidden hazards right in our own homes. One of those hazards is carbon monoxide or "CO." CO is a deadly, odorless, poisonous gas produced when equipment and appliances that burn fuels are operating. When too much CO leaks into your home, you can become very sick, or even die. Here are some important tips to prevent CO poisoning:

- Never use a grill, generator, or camping stove inside your home or garage.
- Never leave a vehicle running inside a garage, even if the doors are open.
- Never use your oven or stove to heat your home.
- Keep dryer vents, furnace, stove, and fireplace clear of snow and other debris.

Home Generators

Generators can provide backup power when power goes out, but always be sure to always take it outside to run it. Never use a generator indoors, even in the garage.

Store Gasoline Properly

Store gasoline in a locked, well-ventilated area outside of a vehicle or living space such as in a detached garage or shed. Keep only small quantities in an approved container with child safety features and away from any source of heat, spark or flame.

CO Alarms

If your home has fuel-burning appliances, like generators, or has an attached garage, you should have at least one CO alarm installed. Similar to smoke alarms, have a CO alarm on every level of your home, especially near sleeping areas, and keep them at least 15 feet away from fuel-burning appliances. Test CO alarms regularly and replace every 5-7 years. Remember, CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms and vice versa!

Leave the House If the CO Alarm Sounds!

- Immediately move outdoors or to an open window or door for some fresh air.
- Call 9-1-1. Remain outside or by an open window until emergency personnel arrive.

Symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu, but without fever:

- Headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness
- For more information about preventing CO poisoning, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/co/>



Happy Home

Palmer's Market

Fill your home with joy and keep winter blues away by adding simple, pretty and cheerful touches.

Winter's frigid temperatures and short daylight hours can have a negative effect on our moods. Keep your sunny disposition during the dreary winter months with easy and inexpensive ways to brighten your surroundings.

There's nothing like the vibrant colors of fresh flowers. Treat yourself to a bouquet or bloom bearing plant such as an iris, daffodil or tulip. Flowers are not only beautiful but they are fragrant too. Pick vivid pinks, yellows and purples, which are bound to lift your spirit.

A bowl of fruit is an inexpensive and colorful way to bring nature into your home. Limes,



lemons or oranges in a decorative bowl make an attractive centerpiece, cocktail table or mantle decoration.

Scented candles are a welcome addition to any room. With the endless variety of scents available, you're bound to find one that evokes happy memories, thoughts of warm sunny days or a favorite time or place.

Pillows and throws bring color, comfort and

warmth to your home. They are a quick and cheerful decoration that can be changed at whim.

Homemade comfort food whipped up in your kitchen is always a welcome treat. Try a new recipe and share it with friends. **Palmer's Market** on Heights Road in Darien has a recipe kiosk by category that shoppers can browse through.

Palmer's can put together weekly meal plans, even working with dietary needs (low salt, gluten-free, etc.). Call them at 203-655-2077 and they will deliver a week's worth of meals or have them waiting for a curb-side pick-up. You can also call in your grocery list and they will have your order ready and waiting for curb side grocery pick-up.

Friendly, helpful senior conscious local retailers, like Palmer's, can be a one stop source of providing elements of brightness and joy to a home.

Comfort and Relaxation

Marylou Williams & Julia Ambrosi of Williams & Company

Winter is here! — And it is cold and dry everywhere. Whether you've been out shoveling the walk, getting the snow and ice off the car, or doing some household chores, here are a few suggestions to make yourself a little more comfortable.

The heat is on – and it is very drying, making it very important to moisturize your hands and body. Heat is very dehydrating too, so drinking water and soothing liquids are essential.

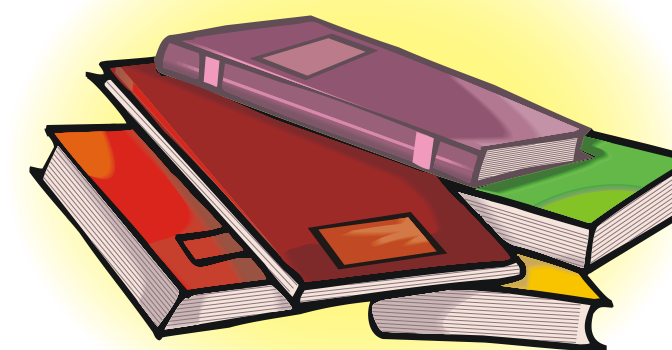


Treat yourself to a bit of relaxation by warming up with a wonderful herbal neck wrap. Neck wraps go in the microwave for a couple of minutes and stay warm up to an hour. Wrap it around your neck and shoulders and it will warm your entire body while reducing stress and some of the annoying aches we all get. While you are relaxing, enjoy a cup of your favorite herbal tea. The herbal tea has antioxidants to help your body stay healthy. When you do these things together, you are warming yourself from the inside out, and you will feel relaxed and calm while enjoying the aromatics as well.

Make the best of winter by staying cozy and relaxed.

Let Darien Library Help You Keep Cozy this Winter

Let's face it. It's Winter and we live in Connecticut. Venturing out in the ice and snow is not only unpleasant but can also be dangerous. Luckily, there are ways to take advantage of **Darien Library's** services from the comfort of your home. For example, Darien residents of all ages, temporarily or permanently homebound, may use Dial-a-Book to have books, DVDs, audiobooks on CD, and other items delivered to their home free of charge. Volunteers deliver these items to you and will pick them up when you are finished with them. The Library offers an extended loan period of six weeks for these items. To use this free service, simply call the Library at 203-655-1234.



The Library also offers downloadable eBooks through a service called OverDrive. If you own an iPad or eReader like the Amazon Kindle, you can borrow these digital items without having to leave your home (or reading chair). Call the **Library's Help Desk** for assistance in setting up your device at 203-669-5238.

Friendly Connections — a Program of Family Centers

Friendly Connections is an innovative service for the aging and/or homebound population. Friendly Connections offers a variety of outreach services designed to keep people connected, supported and stimulated. **Friendly Connections** is a great way to continue your education and stay connected with the community.

Winter is a great time for telephone courses, given the convenience of being home and having the time. Friendly Connections Telephone Courses offer an assortment of educational, social and enrichment opportunities. Courses are conducted over the telephone and cover a wide variety of topics designed for the active Boomer interested in continuing their education and for the older adult looking to stay involved in the community.

Specialty support groups include a Caregiver's Support group for those caring for a friend, spouse or parent, an Alzheimer's Support group led by a member of the Alzheimer's Association team and a Stroke Support group for those recovering from a stroke and their caregivers. Best of all, participating is easy! You can call in at the time of your group or even arrange to have an automatic call made to you!

In addition to telephone based groups, Friendly Connections provides friendly callers and other home services. **For information about the Friendly Connections** programs contact **Allison Plunk, Program Coordinator**, at 203-661-8841.



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day at the spa, a party, or special event like a play, a night out with friends, or a sporting event.

• **Relax!** You're busy! Even if you enjoy being busy, everyone needs some time off. Try to spend a few minutes each day doing nothing. Read a book or magazine, sleep in on the weekend, go to bed early, try some meditations, or take a yoga class. Relaxation, especially in the form of yoga, can alleviate stress and leave you with a calm energy.



• **Embrace the Season** Instead of always avoiding the cold and the snow—look for the best that it has to offer!

Enjoy the snow while it lasts—after all, it's only here a few months per year. Seeing winter in a positive light, with all the fun activities that it has to offer, will keep your spirits high.

• **Get Social Support** Don't underestimate the power of friends, family, and neighbors. Who can you turn to when you're down and need a pick-me-up? Don't be afraid to ask for help or encouragement when you need it. Something as simple as a phone call, a chat over coffee, or a nice email or letter can brighten your mood.



• **Catch some Zzzz's** People naturally want to sleep a little bit more during the winter. But with all we have going on, sometimes sleep is the first thing to go. Aim for 7-8 hours each night, and try to keep your bedtime and waking time consistent. That way, your sleeping patterns can normalize and you'll have more energy. Try not to oversleep—it can actually make you MORE tired. Don't forget naps! A short (10-30 minute) afternoon nap may be all you need to re-energize midday.



Did you know that Aging in Place+Gallivant sends out a monthly e-mail?

We compile and share important opportunities, events, and reminders that are of interest to seniors in and around town.

Join our distribution list!

Please e-mail us at admin@aginginplacegallivant.org. Put "e-mail" in the subject line and include your name and address.

Don't do e-mail?

Let us know if you would like us to mail you a printout of the monthly information we compile. Please call **Aging in Place+Gallivant** at 203-585-4094.





Aging in Place+Gallivant provides the following services to all Darien residents age 60+:

- Transportation within Darien, Stamford, Norwalk and New Canaan, Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Telephone referral, advice and counsel.
- Volunteer services — Friendly Visitors, Shoppers, Helpers and Drivers along with seasonal services such as snow shoveling and leaf raking.
- Out and About newsletter.
- Monthly email blasts promoting events and services.
- Social and educational programs throughout the town.
- Referrals to discounted vetted service providers such as:
 - Appliance Repair
 - Computer Services
 - Electricians
 - Hairdressers
 - Handymen
 - Landscapers
 - Plumbers
 - Repairmen
 - Small Chores
 - and more!

Call Aging in Place+Gallivant at 203-585-4094 for free information



When you need a ride within Darien, Stamford, Norwalk and New Canaan, call our friendly Gallivant dispatcher, Drivers Unlimited, directly at 203-655-2227

24-hour advance notice and a voluntary contribution are appreciated

Wonderful Winter Hobbies to Nurture at Home

Winter naturally draws us closer to home, providing the perfect excuse to experiment with new crafts and skills. Whether you already have a hobby that you'd love to make more time for or are looking to learn something new, let these ideas spark your imagination.

Garden Planning and Winter Potting

There may not be much left to do outdoors, but you can still get your hands dirty with a little indoor gardening. Force bulbs, expand your houseplant collection, or plot out next year's dream garden (see article below).



Cook Winterworthy Meals



If cooking is a passion, up the ante in winter by setting a goal to learn a new cooking skill or try a new dish each weekend, when you have more time on your hands. You could even make it a social event by starting a cooking club, or host a book club with foods related to the story.

Join a Knitting Circle

If you are a new knitter, joining or starting a group dedicated to the craft can give you the motivation and expert advice you need to see your first projects through from start to finish — and gain new friendships to boot.



Try Woodworking

Always wanted to try building something? Use any extra downtime this winter to teach yourself about woodworking with a few simple

starter projects. Arm yourself with a set of basic tools and a helpful (and fun) book.

Spark Your Creativity



Release your inner artist and make some time for crafts, painting, or sketching. Enjoy the process and you will be pleasantly pleased with your results.

Write Actual Pen-and-Paper Letters to Friends

Correspondence is becoming something of a lost art — which makes handwritten and mailed notes all the more charming. Delight your friends and family this winter by sending updates by snail mail, just because.



Play an Instrument

Whether you played an instrument when you were a kid or always wanted to learn but never had the chance, winter can be a great time to commit to brushing up on your musical skills.

Strictly for the Birds

Set up a bird feeder near a window so you can watch the birds flock to it. Use different seeds to attract different birds and get a book to identify them. Bird watching is not only enjoyable, but a peaceful and calming hobby.



Become Computer-savvy

Learn how to use Skype to video chat and Facebook to share news and photos with family members. If you need basic computer instruction you can find help at the Senior Center and the Library.



Gardening in the Winter: Planning, Dreaming and Doing

Peter F. Eder

Losing your gardening momentum in the doldrums of winter can be an easy thing to do. However, this is a great time to plan for Spring.

Combing through garden magazines and catalogs for new garden goodies, plant varieties, and the latest in plant food or soil amendments can be one of the more enjoyable tasks for a gardener. Spending time during the Winter evaluating your beds, making lists of new perennials you want to add, or planning the space to use the seed of the latest annual you've been wanting to try can be almost as fun as planting in the Spring. The worst predicament a gardener can face is having little to no room left in the garden! And a little planning can go a long way.

Most plants are going to be much happier if they are moved while they're dormant, so this time of year gives you the opportunity to assess beds and make changes to what didn't work last season. Do your research and find an online site that has a large and diverse selection of plants.

In recent years, I have discovered and been experimenting with ornamental grasses. Easy to maintain, many are perfect for our corner of the country. I would recommend Earthly Pursuits, a unique nursery and grass farm in Maryland. You can find them at www.earthlypursuits.net

Make sure you get insight on how plants will perform, in what conditions they do best, and what special needs they might have. It also gives you the opportunity to recognize an aggressive or invasive self-seeder which is an important aspect that gardeners should know before they make a purchase.

So you can spend the Winter doing the research, creating your wish list and having your plan in hand for when the weather starts to break out into Spring.

