

Blanche McCarthy Winsted Senior Center

Ellen Schroeder, Director

The Winsted Senior Center has provided services to Winsted residents, age 55 and older, for 50 years. Regular recreational programming at the Center includes light aerobic exercise classes, movies, card playing, Wii bowling, line dancing, crafts, and bingo. Special social events include ice cream socials, picnics, "theme parties", holiday programs, intergenerational events, and programs with musical entertainment. Educational programs and speakers are provided on a variety of topics of interest, including medical insurance, assisted living, legal issues, health issues, and safety concerns.

The seniors pay for all their own activities, programs and trips. No Town monies are used for their programming. The seniors have a "senior club", to which they pay yearly dues. Being a "member" allows for discounts on ticket prices for events. The seniors have 2 fundraisers each year. The proceeds are used for paying for entertainment at special events, programs, etc.

The seniors are involved in community service projects, including food drives for the Salvation Army.

The Center has a book and magazine lending and exchange program. Seniors are also welcome to sit in the sunroom and read. The Center has 2 computers with internet service, which the seniors pay for with their own funds.

Medical clinics are provided for blood pressure checks, blood sugar testing, cholesterol screening, foot care, eye and hearing testing, and flu and pneumonia shots.

Once a month, Attorney Debra Brown comes to the Center to provide free legal advice.

AARP offers its Smart Driver Course at the Center twice a year.

As the Municipal Agent for the Elderly, Director Ellen Schroeder provides assistance in filling out rent rebate applications, insurance forms, and Dept. of Social Services redetermination forms, and provides referrals to appropriate agencies and services as needed. Last year, the director processed 256 rent rebate applications for Winsted's senior and disabled citizens. She also distributed 150 farmers' market coupons to seniors who met age and income requirements.

The Director serves on the Board of Directors for the Helping Hands Chore Service.

The Director writes a monthly newsletter, which details events at the center and items of interest to the seniors.

The Senior Center is designated as an emergency shelter by the Town.

All full time staff members are CPR and first aid certified.

Our daily Nutrition Program provides balanced meals each weekday at the Center. With a physician's orders, Winsted's homebound seniors may receive Meals on Wheels.

The Center offers travel opportunities for the seniors. Several day trips are offered monthly and overnight trips run 4 or 5 times yearly.

Our van provides rides, within Winsted, for seniors and the disabled Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. These rides may be used for medical appointments, senior center activities, shopping, and errands.

The DDS (Department of Developmental Services) funded van provides rides for DDS clients to the center and for group activities. Once a month, the N.W. Transit District provides a van for short day trips for up to 15 seniors for a donation of \$7 per senior.

Our DSS "Elderly Enrichment" program provides educational and social programs for seniors who the state has medically classified as mentally retarded. DDS grant monies fund this program, which encourages the integration of its clients with the rest of our senior population. This is a model for other such programs being developed across the state.

Senior Center Staff 15-16

(Town employees)

Director – Ellen Schroeder

Part time office assistants – Craig Closson, Ann Sears

Part time van drivers – Louis Fracasso, Joseph Landor

(Grant paid employees)

Nutrition program part time site manager – Carol Keslow

Department of Developmental Services (DDS) program coordinator – Betsy Anderson

DDS assistant coordinator – Susan Moran

DDS program aide – Yvonne Gilley

DDS van driver/aide – Linda Moore

