



POMFRET SENIOR CENTER NEWSLETTER



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February Events

Although the weather has finally become seasonably cold, the offerings at the Pomfret Senior Center will warm you up!

Tai Chi - The Tuesday Tai Chi class continues to grow and we are currently looking for a time to add a second class. Instructor Kim Boccacio has enjoyed getting to know the seniors who attend and feels that a second class would help to secure a regular and beneficial practice. Until we do, Tai Chi will continue on Tuesdays at 10:15.

February Movies - Our **Valentine's Day** celebration will take place on Thursday, February 11th. We will screen the film *The Notebook*, a film about a poor and passionate young man who falls in love with a rich young

woman and gives her a sense of freedom. They soon are separated by their social differences. We also plan to decorate cupcakes to celebrate the day. Wear red and join us to celebrate!

On Thursday the 25th, we will screen *Coal Miner's Daughter*, the biographical story of Loretta Lynn, the legendary country singer that came from poverty to worldwide fame. She rose from humble beginnings in Kentucky to superstardom and changing the sound and style of country music forever.

Yoga will continue on the 4th, 11th and 18th. Our instructor Anne Richards will be taking a short break after that and we expect to resume the practice in

April...stay tuned.

The third week of the month will bring a variety of music to the center. The Pomfret School Grifftones, a very talented acapella group, will entertain us at lunch with a short program on Tuesday, the 16th. Ted Reynolds, a local musical superstar, will share his beautiful voice and impressive musical talent with us on Wednesday, the 17th at 12:30. If you haven't had the chance to hear him, don't miss this opportunity. He moved many to tears with his performance of "Oh Holy Night" at Christmastime.

We round out the month with Bingo, Trivia and Family Heirlooms. All dates are on the calendar for these activities.



Why Adult Coloring?



I have been curious about the adult coloring craze for a while. I often picked up the glossy books, colorful on the outside and starkly black and white within, and wondered...why? In a time where there is so much to do, why would I take up a childhood pastime that would not yield a truly useful or frameable product at the end? I had read the benefits of coloring are to relieve stress, to improve concentration and to open the mind to creativity and problem-solving. I have never been able to sit and watch TV without something else to do, be it needlework, paying bills, or sorting photos (another option would be keeping my mouth busy by consuming snack food!). I come from a

long line of annoyingly productive people and passively sitting in front of the television just isn't in my blood.

So this Christmas season, while out shopping, I shyly picked up a small book and some markers. I squirreled them away until after the busy rush of family and friends had subsided. When January arrived, I pulled it out and began to follow the lines of a repetitive pattern. I only had to make color choices and felt unburdened by the vastness of a blank page. I have always been a doodler as it relaxed me and helped me to focus on lectures and lessons in college, yet the doodles I created usually reverted to

eyes and trees which honestly felt a little limiting. Following someone else's lines allowed me to open my own mind and release the stress of the day. In short, I was hooked!

If you haven't tried it yet, I encourage you to jump in! We have books, fine tipped markers and colored pencils at the center and will have fresh pages to color in February. You can color and talk with a friend! You can watch a movie and color, or just sit quietly as you fill the page in front of you. Because coloring is a centering activity, it will give your amygdala (the part of your brain that triggers your fear response) a rest, allowing a sense of calm and well-being. And really, even if it just allows you to revisit your childhood for a short time... what could be wrong with that?

Nothing can dim the
light that shines
from within

Effective Weight Loss submitted by Peg Bernat

It is that time of year again – the parties are over, the tree is down, the colleague you've teased about being covered in glitter for most of December is no longer leaving a trail of "fairy dust". It's time to dump the sweet remnants of Christmas.

Nutritionists often suggest being most restrictive during the first two weeks of your weight loss journey because research shows that the number of pounds lost in that first month is one of the best predictors of long-term success and that immediate loss is motivating.

Adding a workout helps to burn calories and fat and boost your

metabolism. Lance Dalleck, Ph.D., an assistant professor of exercise and sports medicine at Western Colorado State University advises strength-training 2-3 days per week, along with 3-5 cardio sessions per week. Be wary of hunger signals as you start exercising. Use the HALT method to discern if you are **h**ungry, **a**ngry or **a**nxious, **l**onely or bored, or **t**ired. If you are truly hungry an apple or baby carrots will satisfy you.

Next you will want to clean up your diet (and your pantry). Eating less processed foods, more vegetables, lean protein and healthy

fat will fill you up and help regulate the hunger/fullness signals to your brain. Keeping a food log leads to a more significant weight loss according to the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

Now is the time to make yourself and your health a priority. When you sit down for a meal set a beautiful table accompanied with soft music. Find ways to reduce stress levels and maximize quality sleep. When you are not receiving sufficient amounts of sleep as you slim down, your body releases much less leptin, a hormone that signals fullness and satiety.



Don't be SAD

For many people, winter is a time for drinking hot chocolate by the wood stove, enjoying walks through freshly fallen snow, or perhaps enjoying a good book under warm covers. For a significant number of other folks, however, winter represents periods of unexplained sadness.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that is related to changes in seasons, and according to the Mayo Clinic, SAD begins and ends at about the same times every year. If you're like most people with SAD, your symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody. However, some people with the opposite pattern have symptoms that begin in spring or summer. In either case, symptoms may start out mild and become more severe as the season progresses. Symptoms specific to winter-onset SAD, sometimes called winter depression, may include: irritability, tiredness or low energy, problems getting along with other people, hypersensitivity to rejection, heavy, "leaden" feeling in the arms or legs, oversleeping, appetite changes, especially a craving for foods high in carbohydrates, and weight gain.

The specific cause of seasonal affective disorder remains unknown. The

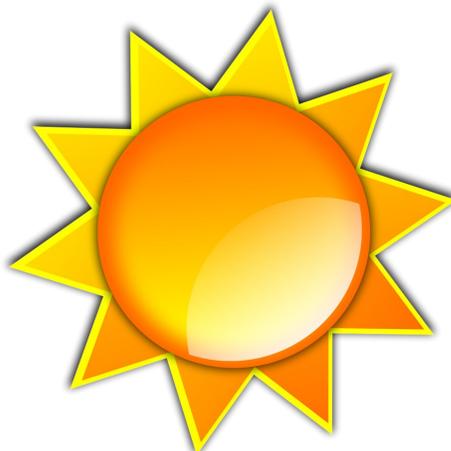
reduced level of sunlight in fall and winter may cause winter-onset SAD. This decrease in sunlight may disrupt your body's internal clock and lead to feelings of depression. A drop in serotonin, a brain chemical (neurotransmitter) that affects mood, might play a role in SAD. Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin that may trigger depression. The change in season can disrupt the balance of the body's level of melatonin, which plays a role in sleep patterns and mood.

Not all is gloomy – There are things that you can incorporate into your daily life that can make a difference. Make your environment sunnier and brighter. Open blinds, trim tree branches that block sunlight or add skylights to your home. Sit closer to bright windows while at home or in the office. Get outside. Take a long walk, eat lunch at a nearby park, or simply sit on a bench and soak up the sun. Even on cold or cloudy days, outdoor light can help – especially if you spend some time outside within two hours of getting up in the morning. Some people get relief from SAD symptoms by using artificial lighting that simulates sunlight.

Exercise and other types of physical activity help relieve stress and anxiety, both of

which can increase SAD symptoms. Being more fit can make you feel better about yourself too, which can lift your mood. Get enough rest and take time to relax. Make healthy choices for meals and snacks. Don't turn to alcohol or illegal drugs for relief. Socialize. When you're feeling down, it can be hard to be social. Make an effort to connect with people you enjoy being around. They can offer support, a shoulder to cry on or a joke to give you a little boost (Yes – a bit of a plug here: The Pomfret Senior Center is open Tues, Wed, Thurs 10am to 2pm). If you find that you continue to experience symptoms of SAD, you may need to seek professional help. Psychotherapy and medication can also play a role in treating this disorder. For further information on SAD, you can log on to mayoclinic.org.

Submitted by: Jim Jutras





POMFRET SENIOR CENTER

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Keeping in Touch

We look forward to keeping in touch with all the seniors in the local area. The center is open to any senior for any program. The only requirement is that you are at least 60 years of age and that we have a current "Form 5" (required for our AAA Grant Funding) for you.

The newsletter is available online at <http://www.pomfret.gov/pomfret-community-senior-center> under "Links".

Printed copies are also available at the center for all seniors. Pomfret residents may also receive the newsletter by mail. If you would rather access it online, please let us know by emailing us at seniorservices@teegonline.org.

If you are not receiving the newsletter and would like to, please either email us or sign up at the center



**WE'RE ON FACEBOOK!!!
POMFRET-SENIOR-
CENTER**