

Kearsarge Council on Aging COA ORFS Visits I-89 Power Plant

The Kearsarge Area Council on Aging presents a variety of programs for area residents 55 and over. Unless otherwise noted below, these programs are held at The Chapin Senior Center, 37 Pleasant Street, New London. You can call for more information at 526-6368.

December 15 – January 31
In-Stitches Craft Group

Join your fellow crafters to knit, crochet, sew or whatever craft you favor. A great time to socialize and pick up tips while you work on your latest project.

Mondays, 10 AM

Chair Exercises

This low-impact exercise program is perfect for those looking for an easy, effective, exercise routine.

Mondays & Fridays, 10:15 AM

Hand and Foot Card Game

A fun and simple card game!

Wednesdays, 1:00 PM

Dominoes

We'd love to have you stop for a game!

Thursdays, 1 PM

VNA Foot Care Clinic at COA

\$20 (\$25 for diabetics with doctor's order) Please call COA at 526-6368 to schedule an appointment.

Friday, January 2, 12:30 - 2:00 PM

Blood Pressure Clinic

Friday, January 2, 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Genealogy Workshop

A great way to receive assistance with your genealogy research.

Thursday, January 8, 10 AM – noon

Breakfast Club Book Discussion

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson. Books may be picked up at the Tracy Memorial Library in New London.

Tuesday, January 13, 9:30 AM.

Questions About Medicare?

Anita Oelfke, Medicare Coordinator for Merrimack County Service Link, will be available at COA on the second Tuesday of each month to answer your Medicare questions. Please call COA at 526-6368 to sign up for this program.

Tuesday, January 13, 1 PM

Sunday at the Movies

Father of the Bride (1950)

Sunday, January 11, 2 PM

Long-Term Care Planning

Learn more about your options for long-term care with Wayne Blanchard

from ServiceLink. Please call COA at 526-6368 to sign up for this program.

Friday, January 9, 10:30 AM

Conversations with Lunch

The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust, Deborah Stanley, Executive Director. Learn how the ASLPT has protected the rural landscape for the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region. Kearsarge Presbyterian Church. Please call COA at 526-6368 before January 21 for reservation.

Monday, January 26, 12 noon

REGULARLY SCHEDULED KCOA PROGRAMS

Monday

Walking at Proctor Academy Gym – 8:30 AM to 10 AM

Tom & Tom's: A Men's Group – 9 AM

In Stitches Crafts Group – 10 AM

Chair Exercises – 10:15 AM

Duplicate Bridge (Bidding Boxes) – 1 PM

Conversations with Lunch – Fourth Monday of each month except May and December – 12 PM

Walking for Seniors – 4 to 5 PM at NLOC (the old middle school gym)

Tuesday

Walking at Proctor Academy Gym – 8:30 AM to 10 AM

Outdoor Recreation for Seniors – 10 AM

Breakfast Club Book Discussion -

Second Tuesday – 9:30 AM

Poker – 2 PM

Wednesday

Walking at Proctor Academy Gym – 8:30 AM to 10 AM

Duplicate Bridge – 9:30 AM

Parkinson Support Group – Second

Wednesday at 1 PM

Hand and Foot Card Game – 1 PM

Tai Chi – 2:30 PM at the New London Presbyterian Church

Thursday

Walking at Proctor Academy Gym – 8:30 AM to 10 AM

Genealogy Workshop - Second

Thursday – 10 AM

Contract Bridge – 9:30 AM

Dominoes – 1 PM

Friday

Walking at Proctor Academy Gym – 8:30 to 10 AM

Chair Exercises – 10:15 AM

Scrabble – 1 PM

On Tuesday morning, high winds, sleet, rain, nor snow could deter 42 curious seniors from the Kearsarge Council on Aging's Chapin Center in New London from learning the inside story of what is really going on at the Hemphill Power Plant in Springfield, visible from I-89. The weekly group, dubbed ORFS (Outdoor Recreation for Seniors), was treated to a special tour led by head honcho Ben Breigh and planned by Bill Coombs, committee member and Springfield resident.

In the lower garage entry, Ben passionately presented a clear explanation of the technology behind the clean, efficient operation, from their mega-wattage and renewable wood procurement and use to their produced power flow to the grid that goes all the way to Pennsylvania.

Many detailed questions were asked and aptly answered. Some interesting facts are that only one half of one percent of New Hampshire trees are harvested, and that they pride themselves on having the "cleanest ash in New Hampshire," sought after by local farmers for fertilizer.

Why is the power plant called Hemphill? It is the name of the area that the plant is built on. The "smoke" you may see emitted from the tall smokestacks is only water vapor.

They did not have enough hard hats for such a large gang, so half the ORFS group took turns ascending open stairs weaving through and wrapping around mixed-up mazes of many pipes, past the gigantic turbine and the enclosed, raging inferno boiler. The air was like a sauna, and the internal noise was very loud but can hardly be heard from the access to George's Mill Road.

The heart of the operation, the multi-computerized control center, was being carefully manned by operator Pine as

Ben showed a schematic of the entire system from one wall of all the control panels.

This room contained all the vital information necessary to monitor and run the 24x7 operation. An overhead TV showed the steady flow of wood chips pouring into the boiler. "If the chips stop, we are in trouble!" said Ben.

Ben spoke about his 18 years of experience, telling how he began in the yard shoveling chips and worked his way by determination and diligent study to learning the individual systems. "I'm just a hands-on kind of guy," he quipped. He has two children of his own, is committed to the green philosophy, and is proud of what he does. Many of the highly-trained staff have Navy backgrounds and are dedicated to keeping their "ship" tight.

After the tour, ORFS convened at Jerry and Barbara Cooper's home on Lake Kroleemook for homemade soup and cake. The little power plant in their own backyard had made quite an impression. Everyone came away with a secure feeling that the power and the wood and machines that produced it were in good hands, with mutual benefits for all involved. All agreed it was a great way to warm up on a rainy day!

If you are interested in other ORFS activities, call or visit the Chapin Center at 37 Pleasant Street in New London, 526-6368. When you sign up you will be sent their free monthly COA Courier newsletter containing all the events at the center.

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