

LONGMEADOW LINES

Meet Senator Candaras' Aide

Janice Hassett

Monday, January 5th, 11- 11:45 AM

LONGMEADOW ADULT CENTER VAN VAN AROUND TOWN

Tuesday, January 13th, 10—Noon

ENFIELD SQUARE MALL

Friday, January 30th
10—1 PM

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS

The Longmeadow Adult Center will make any weather related closings on local television stations. Prior to coming to the Center, please check to see if we are closed or have a delayed opening when the weather is inclement. Always call the Center if you are uncertain—565-4150.

2008 INCOME TAX PREPARATION

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program will be starting on Wednesday, February 4th and ending on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 by appointment. These sessions will be on Wednesdays beginning at 9 am and ending at 1 pm. There will be two counselors preparing taxes. Please call 565-4150 for appointments.

2009 RECYCLING CENTER STICKERS

Residents = \$40; Seniors over 65 = \$30
If renewed by mail: Residents = \$35
Seniors over 65 = \$25

STAYING SAFE AND WARM

In anticipation of what might be a difficult heating season for many Longmeadow residents, the Town of Longmeadow is offering a program to assist residents who may have difficulty heating their homes.

A new program - **Staying Safe and Warm** has been created to help educate town residents about available resources and programs to keep safe and warm during the upcoming winter season. Please visit www.longmeadow.org for more information or call Linda Collina at 565-4150. The program offers:

- **Home Heating Safety Tips**
- **Fuel Assistance Programs**
and
Alternative Activities
(*outside of the home activities
so you can conserve fuel*)

1. The Longmeadow Adult Center has activities and programs for town residents on Monday through Friday from 9 AM - 3 PM. Low cost meals are available every day for a nominal charge. Turn down your thermostat and stop down for a couple of hours... stop by to read the daily paper, watch the news (coming soon), learn something new or just chat.

2. Storrs Library has a large collection of daily/ weekly newspapers and magazines. In addition, there are numerous computers that can be used to search the web, check email, etc. Stop by on cold afternoons and enjoy the comfortable and inviting atmosphere at our local library. Stop by for **Tea Time** between 3-5, Monday—Friday.

Frequently Asked Questions

Longmeadow Assessors Office

How can I reduce my property tax bill?

What is an abatement?

Are there other ways to lower my taxes?

Abatements

The Assessors can lower an assessment if there is an error in the factual data, or if a taxpayer can show that a property assessment is not in line with assessments for an improved property of similar style, age, square footage, amenities, etc. A taxpayer can only seek an abatement from the time the third bill, know as the "actual" bill is mailed (usually one of the last days in December) until these bills are due to be paid on February 1. The application must be in writing on an approved form! (There are different guidelines if bills are mailed after December 31.) Corrections to factual data can be made at any time however, the change in assessment is applied to the next year's bill if it is not done through the abatement process (i.e. timely filed). The timing of when an assessment can be adjusted is prescribed by statute. This applies whether the change will increase or decrease the assessed value. It also applies if the Town made an error on the property card. Again, whether the error is against or in favor of the owner, it can only be applied to the current or future tax year (if filed timely, or the next fiscal year). There are no retro abatements.

Exemptions

Exemptions to Persons

Massachusetts General Laws contain several statutes that provide for individual exemptions from real property tax bills. Personal exemptions are specific to the individual and applied to the owners' real

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Assessor's Office—continued

estate. Exemptions are available for veterans with a war-service connected disability; "legally" blind person; a surviving spouse or minor children of a police officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty; indigent individuals who due to age, infirmity and poverty are unable to pay taxes as well as elderly individuals who meet residency, age, income and asset requirements. Any questions related to personal exemptions should be addressed to the Assessor's Office. Legislation also allows for an income tax credit beginning with the filing of the 2001 income tax form for certain qualifying individuals 65 years of age or older.

For information on income tax credits, please consult your tax preparer or call the Longmeadow Adult Center – 565-4150. For other information, please call the Assessor's Office at 565-4115.



Christmas Tree Pick-Up

The Department of Public Works (DPW) will pick up Christmas trees the weeks of January 5th and January 12th, 2009. Longmeadow residents are asked to place their Christmas trees **on the tree belt in front of your house**. The trees will be picked up by voter precinct (precinct A=Monday, precinct B=Tuesday, etc.) Please call the DPW office (567-3400) with any questions.