

Essex Senior News

MARCH 2019

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 CONTACT INFORMATION

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2 Lincoln Street
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www.essexvtseniors.org

“May your troubles be less and your blessings be more. And nothing but happiness come through your door.”

~ Irish Blessing

History of Irish Soda Bread

Many traditions found in the Emerald Isle are the makings of legends; true Irish Soda bread remains an international favorite. This Irish classic quick bread owns a flavor that make its consumer travel into the history of old. It surprises some people to learn that this traditional recipe hasn't been around for thousands of years. Bicarbonate of soda was first was introduced to Ireland around the 1840s.



As befitting many of the best breads in the world – Irish Soda Bread is a traditional product of a poor country, it was made with only the most basic of ingredients: flour, baking soda (used as a leavening agent instead of yeast), soured milk to moisten and activate the soda, and salt. Before baking, a cross was cut on the top with a knife, to ward off the devil and protect the household. From the earliest times, bread-making was an integral part of daily life in almost every home. Families lived in isolated farmhouses where most kitchens had only open hearths, not ovens, so the breads that developed were baked on griddles or in large three-legged black iron pots over fragrant turf fires. This method resulted in a loaf that was tender and dense, with a slight sour tang and a hard crust. Being quite perishable, it was made every 2-3 days and eaten with the main meal, not as dessert.

Soda bread is shaped in different shapes based on the region of Ireland in which it is being prepared. In the Southern regions it is shaped and baked as a round loaf with a cross marked on top. In the North regions of the country, the soda bread is flattened into a round disc and divided into four equal triangular shapes; each triangle is then cooked on a flat griddle. This method of cooking the soda bread is very quick, ideal for when unexpected guests arrive for a bit of banter. The traditional service of the bread is for a section to be broken off, the piece then split and buttered warm.

Today traditions still carry down. The aroma and taste of traditional soda bread is unique to Ireland, and it's become the established favorite with tourists and locals alike. Now in the 21st century, there is an abundance of readily available, good-quality breads in supermarkets, but still quite a few Irish families still bake their own bread daily from specially treasured recipes passed down through the generations. Give the recipe a try - included in this month's newsletter!

“Welcome. May all who enter as guests, leave as friends.”

- Unknown



ESSEX AREA SENIOR CENTER – WHAT TO KNOW

The Essex Area Senior Center (EASC) is a warm and welcoming place for residents and non-residents of the Essex community. We have grown over the years and are a vibrant group who love to gather, socialize, play games, venture on trips together, dine together, try new things and so much more. The Center is a home-away-from-home for many, and are a strong membership who continue to volunteer regularly, as well as fundraise for upgrades, improvements and new ideas.

The membership is active with local churches and area organizations who continue to support Center activities with meals, supplies and events. Everyone at the Center is also a wealth of knowledge. You never know what you will learn, or who you will speak to that can help you with something you have been trying to work through. Staff is there to help you get the information you are searching for, but also help utilize one another to learn about new hobbies, stores, deals around the community and so much more. It truly is a small world, after all!

The Essex Area Senior Center is strong and healthy because of its members. Alongside the membership, the Center has a long-standing relationship with the Village of Essex Junction Trustees who graciously provide the space and utilities to the membership and visitors. EASC is also staffed with a member from the Essex Parks and Recreation department; the Program Director of Senior Services is supported by both the director of Essex Parks and Recreation and Essex Junction Recreation & Parks. As the two municipalities continue to align departments, the two department Directors will work toward a more unified and efficient process to program development, staff support for EASC and much more to come in the future.

Please feel free to stop by and ask questions, renew your membership, tell your non-member friends about joining the Center and to stop by to say hi and participate!

Welcome New & Renewed Members!

William Lewis Barbara Ailes
Betty Ann Hoover Suzanne Murray
Judith Moreau Jenny Harlow
Patricia Allard Phyllis Knight
Joan Clay Rosalie Schneider
Winn Glover Sally Shoram
Donald Dygert





2019 New & Renewal Memberships

EASC memberships are for individuals 50 years of age or older.

Annual membership dues are \$12 for Essex residents and \$15 for those living outside the Essex community. Please make checks payable to Village of Essex Junction. If you would prefer the monthly newsletter mailed to your home, please add \$6 to your membership payment for the year of mailings.

PLEASE NOTE

 The **Center** will be closed on holidays observed by the Town of Essex municipality.

 Please also be aware that the Center is closed on snow days issued by the Essex/Westford School District. Be careful and stay safe.



MARCH LUNCHEONS – AT • A • GLANCE

LUNCHEON SCHEDULE: SEE CALENDAR INSERT FOR MORE SPECIFIC DATES & TIMES

EASC plans luncheons every Wednesday from late August through the month of May. Luncheon locations may vary between an area restaurant, the Essex Middle School, or right here at 2 Lincoln Street in the main room at the Center. We work with the Culinary program through the Center for Technology – Essex (CTE) for soups provided at the hosted meal-site luncheon or for Friday soup & sandwich days.

1st or 2nd Wednesday: Off-site lunch at local restaurant.

Sign-up is required and the cost ranges from \$5-\$7/member, \$10/non-member.

1st or 2nd Wednesday: Luncheon held on-site at EASC; sandwiches and desserts are provided by sponsoring churches in the community. Soup is provided by the Culinary program at CTE and a program is included during the meal. **Sign-up is requested; this meal costs \$2/member, \$4/non-member.**

3rd Wednesday: Luncheon is held at Essex Middle School; we are invited to a delicious meal through the Child Nutrition Services of the school district and students and school staff take very good care of us.

Sign-up is required ahead of time; deadline Monday, 3/18. This meal costs \$3/member, \$4/non-member.

4th Wednesday (or last Wednesday): This luncheon is a potluck! Admission is a dish to share with your fellow diners (please, no desserts). Cake and ice cream are provided by the Center to celebrate birthdays this month.

Sign-up is requested ahead of time.

Soup & Sandwich Friday: Once a month, we host a soup & sandwich luncheon. Soup and dessert is provided by the Culinary program at CTE and the Center, and you come with a sandwich of your choice.

Sign-up is required ahead of time; meal costs \$1/member, \$3/non-member.

DATE	LOCATION	MEAL	PRICE / PROGRAM
March 6	EASC, 2 Lincoln 11:30am – 1pm	Soup, Sandwich & Dessert	ADL Boys Basketball Team – BINGO
March 13	Grand Buffet, 11:30am – 1pm	Soup, Sandwich & Dessert	\$7/member – no additional program
March 20	Essex Middle School, 12:15-1:15pm	Cafeteria Special	\$3/member – Sign up by Noon on 3/18
March 27	EASC, 11:30am – 1pm	Potluck, dessert provided	March birthdays

Member birthdays this month...

Patricia Allard Joyce Bruner Laurette Cade Lyman (Bud) Conger
 Michael Giancola Frances Hogan Patricia Howard Donna Kunkel
 Beverly Leblanc Beverley Mannings Janice Mejia Gail Nerber Trudy Otis
 Darquise Pecor Brenda Rathe Patricia Read Walter Rogers
 Toni Taylor Gordon Thom Diane Troup Edward Young

Have a great month of celebrating!





BINGO Callers

March 5	Fran Hogan
March 12	Martha DiMaggio
March 19	Maddie Lister
March 26	Monica G-D

Thank you to this month's
BINGO callers!
Who is ready to call in April?



NEW MARCH PROGRAMS!



Come plant with us! Join us on Tuesday, March 12 for National Plant a Flower Day. We will spend an hour that morning planting in small pots to either add to the Center or take with you to brighten your home!



Come bake with us! In the spirit of christening our new oven and to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, let's bake! On Tuesday, March 19th, we will make quick & easy Irish Soda Bread!



SENIOR VAN TRANSPORTATION

The Essex Senior Vans are available Monday – Friday for medical appointments, grocery shopping, rides to and from the Senior Center and more. Looking for a ride? Call **878-6940** Monday thru Friday between 9am – Noon for a reservation.

NEW TO THE VANS? Call **876-5087** for a New Rider packet to be mailed to you. All necessary forms must be completed prior to your first appointment on the vans.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



To learn more about the following opportunities, please connect with Ally, Nicole, Adriane or Betsy at 878-1342 or at the Center:

- Senior Van phone volunteers: preferably Friday mornings, 9am – Noon or sub other mornings
- BINGO callers: one Tuesday a month
- Birthday cards: each month, members celebrating their birthday receive a card from the Center. Brighten their day with a friendly message and we'll get it in the mail to them!

New Program Director – Senior Services

We finished up interviews in February and are in the last steps before moving forward. Stay tuned as details get finalized.

Town & Village Budget Meetings: Transportation available, call ahead

- Town Meeting: Monday, March 4th, Free dinner @ 6:30pm, Meeting at 7:30pm @ Essex High School
- Village Meeting: Wednesday, April 3rd, Free dinner @ 6pm, Meeting at 7pm @ Essex High School



March

Essex Area Senior Center:
876-5087

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					10-Noon: Mah Jongg 1-3pm: Knitting / Crocheting 1-4pm: Cribbage, Cards & Games	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 12:30-3:30: Bridge Town Meeting: call on 3/1 for a ride.	12:30-3:30: BINGO	Luncheon @ EASC: 11:30am – 1pm 1:15pm: Duplicate Bridge 1:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-10:30: Seated Yoga 12:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 1-3pm: Knitting / Crocheting 1-4pm: Cribbage, Cards & Games	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 12:30-3:30: Bridge Sign-up deadline @ Noon for Grand Buffet	*National Plant a Flower Day * 10:00-11:00am: NEW - Come Plant with Us! 12:30-3:30: BINGO	Luncheon @ Grand Buffet: 11:30am – 12:30pm 1:15pm: Duplicate Bridge 1:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-10:30: Seated Yoga 12:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 12-1pm: Soup & Sandwich 1-3pm: Knitting / Crocheting 1-4pm: Cribbage, Cards & Games	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 12:30-3:30: Bridge Sign-up deadline @ Noon for EMS Lunch	10:00-11:30am: NEW - Come bake with us! Irish Soda Bread making 12:30-3:30: BINGO	Luncheon @ EMS: 12:15-1:15pm 1:15pm: Duplicate Bridge 1:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-10:30: Seated Yoga 12:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 1-3pm: Knitting / Crocheting 1-4pm: Cribbage, Cards & Games	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 12:30-3:30: Bridge Sign-up deadline @ Noon for Potluck	12:30-3:30: BINGO	Birthday Potluck @ EASC: 11:30am-1pm 1:15pm: Meal-Site Mtg. 1:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-10:30: Seated Yoga 12:30-4pm: Drop-in Games	10-Noon: Mah Jongg 1-3pm: Knitting / Crocheting 1-4pm: Cribbage, Cards & Games	

EASC Test Kitchen – Try it out!

IRISH SODA BREAD – QUICK & EASY RECIPE

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

Yield: Makes one loaf

INGREDIENTS

4 to 4 1/2 cups flour	1 cup currants or raisins
1 Tbsp sugar	1 3/4 cups buttermilk
1 teaspoon salt	1 lg. egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon baking soda	
4 Tbsp butter	

METHOD

1 Whisk together flour, sugar, salt, baking soda: Preheat oven to 425°F. Whisk together 4 cups of flour, the sugar, salt, and baking soda into a large mixing bowl.

2 Work the butter into the flour, add currants or raisins: Using your (clean) fingers, work the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse meal, then add in the currants or raisins.

3 Make a well, mix in buttermilk, egg: Make a well in the center of the flour mixture. Add beaten egg and buttermilk to well and mix in with a wooden spoon until dough is too stiff to stir.

4 Lightly knead dough and form dough mound: Dust hands with a little flour, then gently knead dough in the bowl just long enough to form a rough ball. If the dough is too sticky to work with, add in a little more flour. Do not over-knead!

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and shape into a round loaf. Note that the dough will be a little sticky, and quite shaggy (a little like a shortcake biscuit dough).

You want to work it just enough so that the flour is just moistened and the dough just barely comes together. Shaggy is good. If you over-knead, the bread will end up tough.

5 Score with an X: Transfer dough to a large, lightly greased cast-iron skillet or a baking sheet (it will flatten out a bit in the pan or on the baking sheet).

Using a serrated knife, score top of dough about an inch and a half deep in an "X" shape. The purpose of the scoring is to help heat get into the center of the dough while it cooks.

6 Bake: Transfer to oven and bake at 425°F until bread is golden and bottom sounds hollow when tapped, about 35-45 minutes. (If you use a cast iron pan, it may take a little longer as it takes longer for the pan to heat up than a baking sheet.)

Check for doneness also by inserting a long, thin skewer into the center. If it comes out clean, it's done.

Hint 1: If the top is getting too dark while baking, tent the bread with some aluminum foil.

Hint 2: If you use a cast iron skillet to cook the bread in the oven, be very careful when you take the pan out. It's easy to forget that the handle is extremely hot. Cool the handle with an ice cube, or put a pot holder over it.

7 Let cool a few minutes: Remove pan or sheet from oven, let bread sit in the pan or on the sheet for 5-10 minutes, then remove to a rack to cool briefly.

Serve bread warm, at room temperature, or sliced and toasted. Best when eaten warm and just baked.

Let us know how it turned out!

QUESTIONS – COMMENTS – SUGGESTIONS? WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN & HELP!

EASC, 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452 • 802-876-5087 • www.essexvtseniors.org

Center Hours: Monday – Friday • 10:00am – 4:00pm