

Safe at Home Committee Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2026 3:00 pm
Meeting Place, Cook and Larder

Attendance: Joyce Ferrentino, Joyce Lapenn, Lynda Brenner, Rene Gibson, Dee Crawford, Natalie Kahan, Patti Rohrllich, Shirley Bresler, Timi Bates, Mary Lou Kersten

Coffee Hour

February - Thad Harshberger will speak on the importance of sleep. Lynn point person.

March – Bingo coffee hour. Patti described the way it will take place. Each committee member should bring two gifts which will be prizes.

April – Linda Leavitt, on gardening. Lynda point person. The topic title is: Spring Gardening Made Simple. Lynda needs a photo of Linda. Suggested that Linda could provide a photograph of one of her favorite flower arrangements.

May – Joyce L point person. May is Older Americans Month. An opportunity to celebrate the achievements of older Americans and discuss needs and services. ACL, Administration for Community Living has not yet publicly announced the theme for the year. The theme for the month might be “Flip the Script.” In the event it is “Flip the Script” Patti will ask Harvey Granat to perform and to address the theme of older American’s month. She will also ask Harvey whether an honorarium is needed for his accompanist. During the month we should send inspirational thoughts on aging to our SAH email list. Dr. Green, who wrote a book on the aging process, was asked to be the May speaker; he is not available. Rene will ask if he is available in August and also ask him to tailor the talk to our SAH audience.

There was discussion that we should all be thinking of creative ways to celebrate seniors during May.

June – Picnic in the park. Will take place the last Tuesday of June, rain or shine. Location will be the RoeJan Park. Joyce F will speak with town board member, Nico Hernandez, to reserve the barn. Haldane has agreed to provide music.

The Bank of Greene County has been asked for a grant of \$500.00 towards the picnic expenses.

July – Baseball, the Great American Pastime. Joyce L responsible person.

August – Hopefully Dr. Green.

September – Brenda Shufelt, Hudson and Whaling. Responsible person, Mary Lou.

October – Sandra Kahlon, could provide a talk on different Medicare and Supplement options. October is open enrollment month. Point person TBD.

Town newsletter submissions for coffee hours need to be in by the 20th of the month.

Background information on the speakers is needed before then to meet this deadline.

Joyce F is not responsible for gathering information on the various speakers that have been recruited by those speakers where she was not the responsible. Please email this information to her in advance to meet the deadline.

Grants

BOGC has been asked for \$500.00 for the Safe at Home picnic. The Berkshire Taconic Foundation ask will be for \$7360. \$2205.00 for operating expenses and another \$5155.00 for the South County/ Hillsdale Pilot Transportation Project. The Hillsdale Town Board approved a resolution supporting the public transportation pilot program on 2/10/26. Too early to know whether grants are being given.

Book Dreams

Joyce mentioned that the owners of Cakes and Books have a foundation and would like to provide free books to those at a SAH coffee hour. Question was whether we should ask for books or gift

certificates. It would be a strong addition to May's Older Americans Month. Joyce said that this foundation is also giving books to the children who participated in the SAH Volunteers program.

Additional Thoughts

It was suggested to pose a question to those attending coffee hour whether any of them would like to participate in a book club. It was also suggested to ask whether people would like a day trip from time to time. Chesterwood? Olana? Berkshire Botanical?

Other program ideas: Fran Columbo suggested Laura Iacovelli who could give a talk on understanding 3D printing, its usages and its practical applications. She has equipment, funded by the NOVA Foundation.

A different concept for a coffee hour is a talk on aliens in the Berkshires. Tom Weaver is a compiler of this information and could do a presentation. Patti met Weaver.

Patti suggested introducing a participatory event of coloring books to a coffee hour. Adult coloring books are calming and creative, designed to reduce stress, improve focus and provide relaxation. There are many types of designs or themes which can be tailored to specific interests.

Help stock the blessing box This is an ongoing community responsibility.

Next Meeting, March , 2026 3:00 pm, Friday at Cook and Larder