



Celebrating food, culture, and diversity at the Northborough Senior Center

When you visit the Northborough Senior Center, one of the first things you might notice is Bistro@119, their on-site restaurant. "We're open to the public and serve made-to-order food every Monday through Thursday," says Kendra Fal detta, the center's Director.

"On any given day, we serve lunch to about 30 to 80 people," she adds. "It's a really friendly and welcoming place. I love walking in there and hearing 100 different conversations going on."

A focus on diversity and culture

Bringing people together is one of the things Fal detta thinks the Northborough Senior Center does especially well. In addition to connecting seniors through arts and crafts, exercise, and cooking programs, the center puts a big focus on connecting people through diversity and culture.

This past year, they hosted a Diwali celebration with the Indian Society, which was very popular. "We had Indian dancers, snacks, saris, and textiles. It was fun for everyone," says Fal detta.

They also hosted a local rabbi who talked about Jewish history

and culture, and held a celebration for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month that included making lanterns and a Chinese tea ceremony. "We try to focus on making sure everybody in Northborough knows they have a spot here at the Senior Center. Everyone who walks in is greeted with a smile."

Fal detta says she also recognizes the importance of intergenerational programs. "This Halloween, we will host the second annual town-wide 'Trunk or Treat,' which was a big hit last year." The event features cars decorated by seniors, as well as fire and police vehicles, for trick-or-treaters. "We want families and community members to come here and see it's a lively place that has a lot to offer."

A wide array of support

In addition to building relationships in the community, the center also provides support for those in need. A full-time outreach worker is available to help seniors with housing, food, tax preparation, and other concerns. "Not every town has their own outreach worker, so it's wonderful that she's here to help people with whatever services they need," says Fal detta.

We want to hear from you. How does a local senior center or COA help you and your community? Send an email to Healthy.Times@bcbsma.com. We may feature it in a future issue!



➤ To see what services are available in your area, or to become a volunteer, contact your local senior center. Visit mcoaonline.com and click on "Find Your COA."