

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) is the Department overseeing the Health Department, Council on Aging, Youth Counseling Center, and the Veterans’ Services Office. HHS also coordinates the activities of the following boards and commissions: Board of Health, Board of Youth Services, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, and the Human Rights Commission. Additionally, the HHS works with the Food Pantry, Widows Trust Fund Commission, Youth Health and Safety Coalition, and the Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation.

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health of the public and assist residents with accessing basic human needs.



BOARD OF HEALTH

The three member Board of Health meets on a regular basis. At the meetings, environmental health concerns are addressed, public hearings are held, and policy review is performed. The Board of Health met six times in 2013 and conducted the following hearings: three food code variance requests, eleven tobacco sales violations, one housing code violation, and three keeping-of-hens permit requests. The Board granted three food code variance requests, suspended eleven tobacco sales permits for seven consecutive days, granted three keeping-of-hens permits and voted to uphold an order to correct housing code violations.

Additionally, the Board reviewed and adopted the following Regulations: Regulations Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine Delivery Products, Regulations Prohibiting Smoking in Workplaces and Public Spaces, and Regulations Governing the Practice of Bodywork. The Board is currently working on regulations pertaining to medical marijuana dispensaries.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department Office is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Senior Center, located behind Town Hall. The Board of Health is required by State statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection

of the environment from damage and pollution. These mandated requirements are fulfilled by environmental health staff and public health nursing within the Health Department.

Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections

Staff annually permit and regularly inspect restaurants, tobacco retailers, tanning establishments, body art establishments, swimming pools, chicken coops, camps, the ice-skating rink, and three bathing beaches. Inspectors from the Department also investigate numerous resident complaints related to any health issue within the community, ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations and noise and odor concerns. The environmental health division is comprised of two full-time inspectors. The Department also contracts with two food safety consultants to conduct a portion of mandated food establishment inspections.

The Department has worked diligently over the past year to update existing regulations, adopt new regulations, implement an internship program, and conduct mandated inspections. Over the summer the Animal Control Officer retired and during the transition period staff from the Department assisted with animal control duties. The Department continues to work closely with other Town agencies (police, fire, inspectional services, council on aging, schools, public works) to address public health issues in the community.

In an effort to meet growing inspectional needs, the Department implemented an undergraduate public health internship program with Northeastern University’s Health Sciences Department. The Department also recruited a Boston University graduate student to assist with inspectional needs over the summer. By hosting interns, the Department was able to increase its efficiency in responding to housing, nuisance and food complaints, conduct routine inspections, and develop new regulations. In 2013, staff worked on developing three new sets of regulations: Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine Delivery Products; Prohibiting Smoking in Workplaces and Public Spaces; and Governing the Practice of Bodywork.

Tobacco Control

In 2013 the Board adopted new Regulations Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine Delivery Products, and Regulations Prohibiting Smoking in Workplaces and Public Spaces. As a result, the Town of Arlington became one of three communities in the Commonwealth to increase the tobacco sales age from 18 to 21 years old. In addition, the regulations ban the sale of blunt wraps and the sale of tobacco and nicotine delivery products at healthcare and educational institutes. The regulations also govern the sale of single cigars and electronic cigarettes, and prohibit smoking at

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Town-owned parks, playgrounds, beaches, swimming areas and non-school athletic fields, as well as, the area within 15 feet of the entranceway of municipal buildings, childcare facilities or healthcare facilities. In 2013 staff conducted sixty-eight tobacco compliance checks, which resulted in eleven violations where tobacco was sold to a minor. Said violations resulted in the suspension of each establishment's tobacco sales permit for seven consecutive days and a fine of \$100. The Department also issued nine citations to high school students for smoking on school grounds.

Keeping of Hens

The Health Department is charged with enforcing the Keeping of Hens/Poultry Bylaw. Any resident who wishes to keep hens as pets or for the purposes of home egg production, gardening, or similar purposes must obtain a Permit to Keep Hens from the Board of Health. In 2013 the Department reviewed three applications, issued six permits and conducted nine inspections of hen coops/pens.

Swimming Pools

There are eight semi-public swimming pools in Arlington that are inspected by the Department on an annual basis to ensure compliance with 105 CMR 435.000: Minimum Standards for Swimming Pools (State Sanitary Code: Chapter V). Seven of the swimming pools are outdoors which are inspected in the spring / early summer prior to opening for the season. These swimming pools are located at various apartment buildings in Town and the Winchester Country Club. The Arlington Boys and Girls Club is the only indoor semi-public pool in the Town that is open year round. The Department worked with the developer of the Arlington 360 project to review and approve plans for construction of a new pool.

Recreational Camps for Children

The Department issued 3 recreational camp permits in 2013 and inspected each of them to ensure compliance with the minimum housing, health, safety and sanitary protections for children in the care of camps that operate in the Town of Arlington.

Permits Issued	2010	2011	2012	2013
Food	253	324	345	366
Tobacco	24	28	27	25
Waste Hauler	12	12	14	13
Funeral Director	3	3	4	4
Tanning Establishment	2	2	2	1
Public Pool	8	8	8	8
Public Beach	1	3	3	3
Ice Rink	1	1	1	1
Keeping of Hens*	0	1	4	6
Camps	5	7	3	3
Body Art Establishment	1	1	1	1
Bodywork Establishment **	NA	NA	NA	3
Bodywork Therapist **	NA	NA	NA	1
Total	310	390	412	435

*Keeping of Hens Bylaw was approved at Town Meeting on May 6, 2009

**Bodywork regulations were implemented on November 1, 2013

Inspection Conducted	2013	2012	2011	2010
Food Establishment	716	565	430	456
Tobacco Compliance Check	68	52	0	47
Housing	180	202	152	42
Demolition Inspection	11	10	14	18
Nuisance Inspection	256	226	102	249
Keeping of Hens*	9	5	1	0
Bodywork Establishment**	20	NA	NA	NA
Total	1260	1060	699	812

*Keeping of Hens Bylaw was approved at Town Meeting on May 6, 2009

**Bodywork regulations were implemented on November 1, 2013

Food Protection

In accordance with 105 CMR 590.000: Minimum Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments, the Health Department is required, as the regulatory authority, to enforce the provisions of this code. The purpose of this code is to safeguard public health and provide to consumers food that is safe, unadulterated, and honestly presented. This code establishes definitions, sets standards for management and personnel, food operations, and equipment facilities, and provides for food

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establishment plan review, permit issuance, inspection, employee restriction, and permit suspension.

The Department assigns each food establishment a risk-based category. A food establishment that sells packaged food, such as a convenience store, is considered low risk and is assigned to a category one and is inspected one time per year. A food establishment that serves food to a highly susceptible population, such as a nursing home, is considered high risk and is assigned a category four and is inspected four times per year.

In 2013 the Department issued 195 food establishment permits (including mobile food and residential permits) and conducted 615 routine and follow-up food inspections. Additionally, the Department issued 171 temporary food establishment permits, including the Farmers Market permits, and inspected 119 temporary food vendors, including those at events such as the Feast of the East, Taste of Arlington, Greek Festival, Farmer's Market, Town Day and other various public events throughout the year.

The Department also investigated twenty-two food complaints and held seven administrative hearings to discuss food safety. The Board heard testimony from three establishments applying for variances from the 105 CMR 590.000; all three were granted. Fifteen new food establishments opened or changed ownership through an updated plan review process, including two residential kitchens, and eight establishments closed.

Food Permits Issued	2013	2012	2011	2010
Food Establishment Permits	181	177	173	167
Mobile Food Permits	3	3	6	8
Residential Kitchen Permits	11	10	8	4
Farmers Market Permits	13	12	12	14
Temporary Event Food Permit	158	143	125	60

Housing

The Department conducted 180 inspections of rental and owner-occupied housing units in 2013 in accordance with 105 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 410.000, Massachusetts Housing Code. When a housing inspection is requested by a resident, an inspector conducts the inspection and may cite a landlord for violations of the housing code. The landlord is then ordered to correct violations and an inspector conducts a final inspection to verify the violations have been corrected. Violations documented in 2013 included: un-

sanitary living conditions, insufficient hot water, leaking plumbing fixtures, lead paint determinations, insect and rodent infestations, and many more.

The Hoarding Response Team (HRT) investigated and followed up on eighteen hoarding cases in 2013. The HRT is collaboration between Police, Fire and Health officials. The team consists of two health inspectors, a police officer and a clinical responder. In most cases, the team was able to work with the individuals to bring the homes into compliance without condemning the property. The Department did, however, condemn two properties due to uninhabitable conditions, including housing containing illegal apartments.

The Department continues to work closely with the Council on Aging and Minuteman Senior Services to assist senior residents with alternate housing and services, such as cleaning when necessary.

In 2013 the Department conducted eleven inspections at properties awaiting demolition in order to ensure the health and safety of the site. The inspection requires asbestos removal, pest control, dust control, and other control measures to protect the health of the public.



Nearly 400 residents received flu shots at Town Day in 2013

Public Health Nursing

Influenza and Pneumonia Vaccinations

The Health Department, with the assistance of the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) volunteers, administered 2,147 vaccinations in 2013, a 2% increase over 2012. The increase is particularly impressive given the increased competition from pharmacies in the area. The vaccination clinics continue to receive positive feedback from residents, who appreciate the convenience and efficiency of the clinics. The clinics also serve as practice for the Department's emergency preparedness plan should the Town be faced with a crisis. The Health Department is thankful to the MRCs, who provided 300 volunteer hours of medical and non-medical support that made the vaccination clinics such a success.

The Health Department also coordinated with the University of Massachusetts student nurses to provide Shingles vaccinations to uninsured residents sixty years of age and older. Approximately eighty residents received the Zostavax vaccine.

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Communicable Disease Surveillance

Communicable Disease Monitored	2010	2011	2012	2013*
Amebiasis	0	2	0	0
Babesiosis	1	0	1	2
Campylobacter Enteritis	4	17	11	10
Chicken pox	6	0	2	3
Cryptosporidiosis	2	1	1	0
Enterovirus	0	0	0	0
Giardia	1	5	4	3
Haemophilis Influenzae	1	2	1	0
Hepatitis A	0	0	0	1
Hepatitis B	1 chronic	5 chronic	14 chronic	21
Hepatitis B			1 acute	0
Hepatitis C (acute)			1	6
Hepatitis C (chronic)	23	21	30	31
Hepatitis E			1	0
Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis			1	2
Influenza	0	5	19	60
Invasive Bacterial Infection		1	1	1
Legionellosis	1	2	2	3
Lyme Disease	6	3	24	39
Malaria	0	0	0	1
Measles	0	0	0	4
Meningitis	0	1	0	0
Mumps	0	0	0	2
Norovirus	0	0	2	0
Pertussis	6	4	6	2
Rubella			1	0
Salmonella	8	5	1	4
Shigatoxin	1	1	0	0
Shigellosis	1	1	1	1
Strep pneumonia invasive	2	2	3	1
Group A strep	2	1	0	0
Group B strep	6	3	3	0
Toxoplasmosis			1	3
Tuberculosis	5 active	5	5	4
Tuberculosis contacts	40	0	6	4
Tuberculosis A/B				2
Tuberculosis Latent			34**	42
Vibrio sp.	0	1	1	1
West Nile Virus	0	0	1	0
Yersiniosis	0	0	1	0
Total	117	88	180	253

* 2013 includes contact, and suspected cases in addition to probable and confirmed cases.

** Tuberculosis Latent added in 2012

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, Arlington continued to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in conducting online disease reporting through the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN). State law requires that doctors, hospitals, and laboratories report contagious diseases including diseases such as tuberculosis, whooping cough, and salmonella. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a contagious disease, the public health nurse is mandated to conduct an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any possible disease outbreaks. The online reporting system has streamlined disease investigation and has assisted the MDPH with early detection of contagious disease trends beyond community boundaries. In 2013 the Health Department also began using the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) database. This web-based registry system provides health care providers and families with complete and secure immunization records. It also provides an infrastructure for tracking essential information during a natural disaster or bioterrorism event. MDPH hopes to increase immunization rates, resulting in a healthier population.

Weights and Measures

To ensure compliance with the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act, the Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment. This includes retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks, and food establishments. The Sealer responds to all consumer complaints to ensure fairness and accuracy.

As merchants are inspected annually, compliance with standards and accuracy of merchant measuring devices has increased steadily. The Sealer of Weights and Measures determines the amount of savings by computing the amount of fuel pumped each year from a particular measuring device such as a gas pump.

Device Sealed in 2013	Arlington	Belmont
Scales 10 lbs and under	12	3
Scales 100lbs and under	111	58
Gasoline pump meters	151	130
Vehicle tank meters (heating oil trucks)	33	0
Taxi Cab Meters	18	0
Bulk heating oil tank meters	3	0
Bottle and can return dispensers	4	5
Individual Weights	0	56
Other devices	3	0
Total	335	252

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In 2010 the Department began contracting with the Town of Belmont to provide sealing services in Belmont as Belmont did not have a sealer of weights and measures.

BOARD OF YOUTH SERVICES



Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC)

The Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC), a division of Health and Human Services, is a community-based and fully licensed, mental health counseling center. It is the mission of AYCC to promote and support the social and emotional wellbeing of all Arlington's youth and families, regardless of ability to pay. AYCC provides direct individual and family counseling, psychiatric evaluation and consultation, pharmacological services, support and prevention groups for targeted populations, and case management to Arlington residents struggling with basic life needs. AYCC collaborates extensively with other local, youth-serving agencies to remain fully integrated in the community and responsive to its mental and behavioral health needs.

Over the past year AYCC continued to focus on delivering high quality, accessible mental health services to Arlington youth and families, while also striving to improve the efficiency of operations and achieve financial stability and sustainability. In this regard, 2013 was marked by significant changes and notable accomplishments for AYCC. With the retirement of beloved, long-time employee and recent Director, Phyllis Brown, the agency reorganized its administrative structure, hiring a new Executive Director, creating a Clinical Director position, and hiring a new Assistant Clinical Director. AYCC maintained its existing clinical team, including a psychiatrist, psychologist, 13 fee-for-service clinicians and a clinical intern. With a new administrative structure in place, AYCC is well-positioned to develop its fundraising potential through active solicitation of grants and foundation support, as well event organizing and donor appeals. The new structure will also support a growing fee-for-service clinical team, which will, in turn, help reduce the patient waitlist.

In addition to the organizational changes mentioned above, AYCC implemented a new electronic medical records and billing system to replace an outdat-



AYCC Gala

ed paper-based system and expensive billing agency contract. The new electronic medical records and billing software will enable greater efficiency in assessing clinical caseloads and assigning new clients, and will support more consistent and accurate payment practices. The system went live on October 1st and, while the agency is still learning the various capabilities of the software, staff are steadily becoming proficient users of the system



AYCC ChariTea

Highlights

In collaboration with the Board of Youth Services and other volunteer organizers, AYCC raised over \$30,000 from fundraising events, including the 2nd Annual Team Up for AYCC Soccer Tournament, the 3rd Annual Out on the Town AYCC Gala, and the ladies ChariTea event sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

For the 3rd year in a row, all proceeds from High Rock Church's Annual Christmas Benefit Concert benefited AYCC's case management program. With funding from High Rock Church, an AYCC social worker is available to provide case management to Arlington residents in need of resource support. AYCC also benefited from two local hockey events, the Shoot for the Cure family hockey tournament and the Guns and Hoses charity hockey game between the Police and Fire Departments.

AYCC received grant funding from a number of sources, including Symmes Foundation, CDBG and the Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 17. AYCC completed its second year of a three-year CHNA17 grant to support intervention and treatment services for substance involved youth, while also securing a mini-grant from CHNA 17 to create a volunteer domestic violence advocates program. In addition, AYCC continued

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to receive funding from the Arlington Public Schools through a yearly school contract and a federal school grant- Project Success- to provide counseling services, group work and consultation to Arlington schools.

AYCC continued to develop and expand the scope of its group work to include: social skills groups, anger management groups, substance abuse prevention and stress management groups, parent support groups, domestic violence support groups, and a support group for grandparents raising grandchildren.



In collaboration with the Board of Youth Services, AYCC participated in a number of community outreach and support initiatives, including hosting a booth at Arlington Town Day, participating in the distribution of Thanksgiving Baskets, and lending support to the Holiday Help program.



COUNCIL ON AGING

The Arlington Council on Aging (COA), a division of the Department of Health & Human Services, primary responsibilities are to identify the needs of Arlington's elder population, and to design, promote, and implement services and programs to address such needs. In addition, the COA coordinates existing services in the community on behalf of seniors, as well as providing various Town offices vital information factoring in the needs of the elder population, making Arlington a dignified and livable community for its older community members.

The total operational budget for the Council on Aging that serves over 9,300 Arlington residents 60 years and older, is derived from a number of sources. The COA budget consists of municipal funding (37%), Enterprise Fund/COA Van (22%), Formula Grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (15%), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Volunteer & Transportation Coordinator (11%), CDBG/DART (9%), The Trustees of the Symmes Hospital Funding for Medical Transportation (3.5%), Lahey Health & Wellness grant

(2%), CDBG/Adult Day Health (.05%), CDBG/My Daily Call (.05), and CDBG/Lifeline (.05%). In addition the COA received \$8,069 from the Friends of Arlington Council on Aging to support COA programs and services, and the Elizabeth and George Sanborn Foundation provided \$25,000 enabling seniors and their families affected by cancer free transportation to obtain treatment. Volunteer contribution to the organization exceeds 12,000 hours per year conservatively, adding \$96,000 of services to the operational budget.

The COA staff continues to service increasing numbers of seniors and their concerned adult children regarding financial distress in housing, food, fuel costs, and rising medical related costs. The COA utilizes the collective staff experience in providing information leading to indirect and direct access to aging resources for seniors, their families, and community organizations in an effort to lead a dignified life in Arlington. Strong relationships exist through collaborations with Arlington's Emergency Services, DPW, and the other divisions within Health and Human Services. The staff exhausts all resources to address these concerns, and many needs are often unmet due to limited social services.

The COA also serves as a field-training site for students from the University of Massachusetts School of Nursing, Simmons College School of Social Work, Wheelock College, and Salem State University.

Transportation within the COA is a very active component of COAs services with more than 8,000 rides provided in 2013. The van operation utilizes a number of resources, including volunteers, to meet the needs of the seniors in Arlington. As an enterprise fund, the COA Van Transportation is dependent upon generous grants from The Trustees of the Symmes Hospital, CDBG allocations, and small fees collected from riders. Transportation helps reduce isolation by providing a means to be actively engaged in COA programs, the community, and reducing barriers to access to health care and therefore a critical component to our services and mission. There are three options our seniors have access to; the COA Van, Dial A Ride Taxi, and Medical Escort.

The COA Van operates daily, Monday through Friday providing rides to the Senior Center and to a variety of medical appointments. COA has established "Every Day Living" on Thursdays, which allows the senior to do food shopping, hairdressing and other errands.

The Dial A Ride Taxi (DART) program, through generous funding from CDBG and a fixed cost-per-ride by Arlmont Taxi, provides a low cost transportation option for Arlington seniors Monday through Saturday to anywhere in Arlington.

The Medical Escort program utilizes volunteers to drive seniors to medical appointments outside of COAs service area and/or provide individualized assistance to meet seniors' needs. There is a small fee charged for

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this service. The Medical Escort program is supported by eight volunteers.

Approximately 130 volunteers support the organization, providing in excess of 12,000 volunteer hours per year. COA volunteers range in age from 7 years to 98 years of age. Volunteers provide support in key areas, such as administrative support, program development, program operations, medical escort, and annual programs, including the Thanksgiving Day Meal delivery and the Holiday Stocking program through the Friends of Arlington COA. Their collective participation is equivalent to 6.59 FTE's and yields a minimum cost savings to the Town of Arlington of \$96,000. The COA and the staff are beyond grateful to the many hands and hours these outstanding volunteers contribute to the mission of the COA. Volunteers are honored for their service at an annual luncheon.

The Senior Center also hosts Minuteman Senior Services which operates the "Eating Together" Meal site at the Senior Center and provides home-delivered "Meals-on-Wheels."

The growing number of seniors is a developing challenge for the Town of Arlington. The 2010 federal census counted 9,245 elders (60+) in Arlington which when projected to 2030 suggest that one-third of the projected population of Arlington, or 15,193 residents, will be seniors (Metropolitan Area Planning Council). The current needs and future needs will be a part of staffing analysis in fiscal year 2015.

Highlights for 2013

- *Living Well 60 and Beyond: Solutions to Grow Older Gracefully* was the culmination of six months of hard work to provide this first of its kind program for Arlington seniors on October 26. This event highlighted every aspect of the COA as well as community living in Arlington to more than 350 attendees. Dr. Paul Raia, of the MA/NH Alzheimer's Association was the keynote speaker. Thirty-nine exhibitors filled the Hardy School Gymnasium, while the cafeteria served as the lecture hall for five individual presentations. Arlington Police, Armstrong Ambulance, and numerous volunteers provided support for this successful event.
- Received a grant through Massachusetts Department of Transportation that allowed COA to purchase a new transportation van.
- Received an \$8,500 grant from Lahey Clinic to help fund five health and wellness programs.
- Received a \$30,000 grant from the Elizabeth and George L. Sanborn Foundation for the Treatment and Cure for Cancer, Inc. to provide rides to seniors for cancer treatments.

- Received a \$15,000 grant from the Symmes Hospital Funding for Medical Transportation to supplement the COA Van budget to provide seniors rides to medical appointments.
- Collaborated with the Greater Boston Legal Service and the Arlington Police Department in the creation of an Arlington task force to address Elder Abuse and Economic Safety.
- Collaborated with the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered) Aging Project to host a nineteen agency Cultural Competency Training.
- Collaborated with "Keep Moving" and hosted a regional Walking Club Leader Training session for thirty five individuals.
- Created a COA Garden to offer fresh vegetables to those who might otherwise not be able to afford it. This program was grant funded by Park Avenue Nursing.
- Provided over 2,000 outreach contacts through office and home visits by the COA Geriatric Nurse, Social Worker and Intake staff
- Provided over 2,000 units of health services, including podiatry, blood pressure, flu and
- Pneumonia clinics
- Administered programs providing financial support for dental services, transportation, urgent personal needs, Lifeline personal response systems, and adult day health.

Community Partnering Efforts

Partnering with municipal and community organizations creates productive relationships and more efficient means to deliver programs and services helping us to meet the mission of the COA. Minuteman Senior Services serves as our Aging Service Access Point (ASAP). We would be limited in program support and selection without the Arlington Recreation Department (Walk the Rink), Arlington Boys and Girls Club (Arthritis Exercise Class), Retired Men's Club, & Bateman Catering (Thanksgiving Meal), and the Friends of Arlington Council on Aging.

Organizations such as AARP and SHINE provide free tax preparation and health insurance guidance while Rick Fenton and Noreen Murphy continue to donate their time monthly providing free consultation on financial matters and elder law issues, respectively.

The COA receives appreciated support from the Arlington Schools, specifically, the Arlington High School Football team provided free fall cleanup to twenty-three households and the Ottoson Middle School, as part of the COA's LINKS Program, assisted seniors with shoveling and light outside tasks. Additionally, the Bishop, Brackett, and St. Agnes elementary schools designed and provided Thanksgiving and holiday cards for

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over 100 seniors while My Place To Grow entertained seniors with holiday songs.

Goals

COA has been effective in utilizing student interns and volunteers to fill gaps where budgets do not provide for staff. Space continues to be an issue and COA programming is placed in various locations to accomplish its goals. Internal procedural improvements have enhanced efficiencies in the Transportation department. 2014 goals include collaborating with municipal departments for program development, seeking local grants to help with transportation costs, and increasing contact with seniors by 10%

VETERANS' SERVICES

Arlington's Department of Veterans' Services is mandated by The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) to aid and assist veterans and their families. All eligible veterans and their eligible dependents can seek counseling and assistance with applications for federal and state benefits, financial aid, medical care, educational/vocational benefits and burial benefits.

As a result of interviewing thirty-nine veterans and/or their dependents, seven new clients received benefits under Chapter 115 with a total of sixty-nine clients receiving benefits over the course of the year. Twelve veterans were awarded the Welcome Home bonus for service in the military since 9/11. Five Vietnam veterans, two Korean War veterans, and two WWII veterans were advised of their entitlement to a bonus for their service and were given the appropriate form to redeem them. Nine widows of veterans were assisted in receiving their benefits as the surviving spouse of a veteran either Killed in Action, receiving 100% service-connected disabilities from the VA, or veterans who died from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and also an annuity from DVS.

After consulting with many veterans and/or veteran dependents, forty claims were submitted to the VA for service-connected compensation and/or pension, twenty-nine have thus far been awarded. Requests for treatment at the VA medical centers by ninety-nine veterans have been referred and twenty-four burial benefits have been awarded eligible veterans. Markers for all veterans buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery were ordered. This year, five unmarked graves of veterans have been identified, and authenticated, and markers have been ordered.

Veterans' Services is responsible for organizing, coordinating, and participating in the Memorial Day Parade and the Veterans' Day Parade. For Memorial

Day, the office is responsible for decorating the over 5,500 veterans' graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and St. Paul's Cemetery with flags and assuring the maintenance of the veterans' lots. The Disabled American Veterans Chapter 49 assists by decorating the graves at St. Paul's. The file for the Veterans' Honor Roll located at Monument Park in Arlington Center, which will be refurbished at the conclusion of The War on Terrorism, is continuously being updated with veterans from all wars. The Director of Veterans Services also serves as treasurer/coordinator for the Patriots' Day Parade Committee.

The Office of the Department of Veterans' Services, located in The Town Hall Annex, is continuing to purge old files and improve computerization, while reaching out to advertise veterans' benefits and advocate for volunteer opportunities at The Bedford VA Medical Center.

Veterans Benefits, Claims, and Referrals	2010	2011	2012	2013
Chapter 115 Benefits	65	62	69	65
VA compensation/pensions	22	17	26	29
VAMC requests/referrals	73	103	105	99
VA Burial benefits	27	21	24	24
DVS bonuses/annuities	21	24	22	19

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

In its twentieth year of service, the Commission on Disability has continued to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to Arlington officials, residents, public and private agencies, and others to ensure that people with physical, sensory, cognitive, and other disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services and programs. During 2013 the Commission had a full slate of nine Commissioners', all volunteers. As mandated by State law, the majority of Commissioner's have a disability. The mandate brings an intimate and informed understanding of disabilities to the Commission's agenda and ultimate decisions. The Commission continues to bring awareness to Arlington policy makers and other residents as to the legal rights of people with disabilities, enforcing those rights and working towards community inclusion to make Arlington a stronger Town, capitalizing on the strengths each person living and working here has to offer.

Activities

- Staffed an information booth at Town Day

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2013 to answer questions and provide resources about disability legislation.

- Co-sponsored the fifth annual Diversity

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) was created by Town Meeting in 1993 to advance issues related to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and to create a mechanism for addressing complaints arising out of these issues. The mission of the AHRC is to work individually and collaboratively with other groups in our community to celebrate the ever-changing tapestry of our Town, and to emphasize, through educational outreach, the danger of intolerance at every level. The Town Manager, School Committee, and the Town Moderator have appointing authority for the thirteen members of the commission.

The AHRC began the year by electing Robin Varghese as chairperson and Nancy Rhoads as vice chairperson. The Commission filled three vacant seats and hired a new administrative assistant in September.

2013 Highlights

Community Education and Outreach

- Updated its website to increase user friendliness and accessibility.
- Began using Facebook to encourage greater accessibility to members of our community and is pursuing the possibility of obtaining a Twitter account.
- Continued its support of the town's Martin Luther King Celebration.
- Endorsed the Council on Aging's True Story Theatre, "Oral Histories of Arlington, Untold Stories." These are true stories told by real people through drama, dance and music.
- Created a sub-committee to celebrate the 10th anniversary of gay marriage, presented the Bill Shea Every Day Hero Award, and commemorated the 20th anniversary of the AHRC.
- Donated 10 children's books focusing on diversity to the Thompson School Library in honor of long time Commissioner Bill Shea.
- Reestablished the connection between the AHRC and the Massachusetts Association of Human Rights Commissions.
- Hosted a presentation by Jim Nihan, Contract Administrator and Taxi Program Developer for the paratransit taxi program for people with disabilities.
- Supported a weekend retreat for Arlington high school students related to a class on race, society and identity taught by Melanie Konstandakis-Schwartz. A video is sched-

uled to be produced to share with the larger Arlington community possibly via ACMi.

- The Commission purchased the film *Miss Representation* and supporting educational materials. The film, focusing on media portrayals of women and how they influence and affect young people, will be presented in partnership with the Arlington Center for Continuing Education.

Collaboration with Arlington Public Schools (APS) -

Permanently established the school liaison program. Commissioners volunteered to act as liaison to each Arlington school as well as to the METCO program.

Work with Town Government

Worked with Town Manager and discussed the recruitment of Town staff from diverse backgrounds, outreach to business owners with English as a second language.

Incidents and Complaints

The Commission received one formal complaint related to vehicular vandalism and fielded a number of calls from concerned citizens that did not result in formal complaints. The Commission continues to work with the APD and APS to learn of, to track and, when necessary, to address incidents involving graffiti, texting, racist and anti-Semitic speech and threats, and racial profiling when these activities violated human rights.

2014 Goals

- Continue the school liaison program.
- Sponsor an event to commemorate the Bill Shea Everyday Hero Award, the 10th anniversary of the legalization of gay marriage in MA and the 20th anniversary of the AHRC on May 14, 2014.
- Sponsor a viewing of the film *Miss Representation* with a discussion period.
- Sponsor a viewing of the film *Rescue in the Philippines* and a discussion with the film producer.
- Complete an article for the *Arlington Advocate* to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the AHRC and its accomplishments.
- Participate in Town Day.
- Purchase books for Robbins Library in honor of long-time Commissioner Nancy Sweeney.
- Increase collaboration with relevant Town groups and increase outreach to other community groups.