"Opening Doors" Notes

October 16, 2025

Present: Laura Mooney, Holly Rubino, Eleanor Sutton, Greg Miller, Gail Stevens, Mary Seidner, Karen Conniff, Kathy Tisdale, Melissa Fournier, Stephanie Gould, Lori Caine, Carleen Gerber.

Laura gave a recap of work that has been done since the last meeting. This work includes a directory of all the organizations participating in the Opening Doors coalition (deadline for edits is Oct. 31) and designing a brochure about the coalition; copies will be printed for distribution. *Lyme-Old Lyme Neighbors* has written a feature article about Opening Doors for its November issue (circulation is about 5,400 homes).

Roundtable Discussion: Participants were asked to talk about new programs they have introduced recently and how they reached out to residents.

LYSB: Bridge project with Old Saybrook Youth Service Bureau have put signage on the Baldwin bridge for suicide prevention and to acknowledge the bravery of state troopers. QPR training (question/persuade/refer) to provide mental health training has been successful and the library would like to participate in this program. New group to bring grandparents and grandchildren together was started. LYSB uses a a wide variety of media to reach out to residents.

Melissa's Monthly Musings: Melissa has introduced a chatty monthly flyer the newsletter which will be mailed to residents to reach those who do not have computer access. Other organizations can send info about upcoming programs to Melissa to be included.

Nightingale's Acoustic Café: Healing Thursdays that combines music and movement. This program is expanding through word of mouth.

Garden Club: This group needs help with gardening projects and would like to reach out to all age groups. There's an upcoming dahlia swap.

Senior Center: Stephanie has extensive mailing list and so she can send out community event announcements. If group organizers wish to have an event included they should send her an email at seniorcenter@oldlyme-ct.gov with a brief description of the event. It is recommended to keep the subject line very concise (for example, "Owl Program, tomorrow at 3pm"). She says that sending reminders 1-2 days before an event increases attendance. Future programs include programs for people 55 and older and ADD/CPR training. River Valley will also do a program on transportation.

Old Lyme Congregational Church: There are 2-3 programs per month in addition to the support groups, which are open to everyone. Programs are listed on the website.

Library: The "What's on Your Mind?" program drew 15 attendees after Ellie made phone calls to invite people. Melissa will have a naming campaign for the new owl mascot as well as programs to foster kind and civil conversations. Phone calls are a friendlier way to contact people and make them feel included. The success of the Nightingale's Acoustic Café picking parties led to suggestions for a daytime jamming session to be held at the library and possible resources for an electric keyboard were explored.

Social Services: Kathy is willing to help those applying for oil or heat assistance through TVCCA (Thames River Council for Community Action). This information should be included in *Melissa's Monthly Musings* flyer for November. More than 20% of the Lyme community has limited income.

Hadlyme Public Hall: There will 1-2 potluck dinners in 2026. Meditation nights are on Sundays at 7pm. Greg asked how we can cross-sell what we're all doing?

Next meeting: January 15, 2026 at 2pm