

Chesterfield Council on Aging





February 2025 Newsletter



Chesterfield COA & Community Center
 400 Main Road, PO Box 7
 Chesterfield, MA 01012

Brooke Bullock, Director
 coa@townofchesterfieldma.com
 413-296-4007
 Mon. & Fri. 9-11am or by appt.

February Calendar of Events

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
3 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab'N'Go 11:30am	4 Chair Yoga 10am Tech Drop In 11am-2pm Mahjong 1pm	5 Gentle Yoga 11am-12pm Tai Chi 1pm	6 Blood Pressure Clinic 11:30am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am Art Meet Up 1-3pm	7 Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am Tech Class: Chromebooks 10:30-11:30 Tech Drop In 11:30-1:30 Mahjong 1pm
10 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab'N'Go 11:30am	11 Chair Yoga 10am Tech Drop In 11am-2pm Mahjong 1pm	12 Gentle Yoga 11am-12pm Tai Chi 1pm	13 Brown Bag 11:30am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am Art Meet Up 1-3pm	14 Valentine's Day! Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am Mahjong 1pm
17 Presidents' Day (Comm. Ctr. closed)	18 Chair Yoga 10am Tech Drop In 11am-2pm Mahjong 1pm	19 Tech Class: iPhones 10-11:30am Gentle Yoga 11am-12pm Tai Chi 1pm	20 Grab' N' Go 11:30am Art Meet Up 1-3pm	21 Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am Tech Class: Zoom 10:30-11:30 Tech Drop In 11:30-1:30 Mahjong 1pm
24 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab'N'Go 11:30am	25 Chair Yoga 10am Tech Drop In 11am-2pm Mahjong 1pm	26 Gentle Yoga 11am-12pm Tai Chi 1pm Fiber Friends 7pm	27 Grab' N' Go 11:30am Art Meet Up 1-3pm	28 Mahjong 1pm
				

February Classes & Events

Mondays:

Advanced Tai Chi: 9:30am
 Grab and Go Meal: 11:30am
ATTENTION- ALL Oil Painting classes with Vanessa are CANCELLED



Tuesdays:

Chair Yoga: 10am
 Tech Drop In: 11am-2pm
 Mahjong: 1pm

Wednesdays:

Gentle Yoga: 11am-12pm (last class 3/5)
 Tai Chi: 1pm
 Fiber Friends: 7pm (last Weds.)

Thursdays:

Grab and Go Meal: 11:30am
 Blood Pressure: 11:30am (1st Thurs)
 Brown Bag: 11:30am, (2nd Thurs.)
 Art Meet Up (no instructor): 1-3pm

Fridays:

Smooth Moves: 9am (no class 2/28)
 Strength For Life: 10am (no class 2/28)
 Mahjong: 1pm (no event 1/24)
 Tech Drop-In: 11:30-1:30 on 2/7 and 2/21

Special Events:

- 2/7– Tech Connect: Chromebooks class
- 2/8– Art with Lena, 10-12pm, watercolor
- 2/19– Tech Connect: iPhones
- 2/21– Tech Connect: Understanding and using Zoom

ART MEETUP

Practice with any art form in a creative community. Explore new **techniques, experiment** with different styles, and **connect** with like-minded artists. **No teacher**, just a space to create and share your passion.

When: Thursdays, starting 1/9, 1-3pm

What to Bring: Your own supplies

Suggested Donation: \$1

Why Attend:

- Connect with other artists and discover new ideas.
- Learn at your own pace: No pressure
- Build community

Where:

The Chesterfield Community Center- 400 Main Road

Who:

All Northern Hilltowns residents, all ages, all experience levels!

Don't miss this opportunity to make art with your community



GENTLE YOGA
 WITH KRIS MOSE-LIBON
 OF WHIRLIGIG STUDIO

Join Kris Mose-Libon for an 8-week gentle yoga series at the Chesterfield COA.

All levels welcome.

Bring your own mat (or purchase one at the COA) & bring any props you might need.

Suggested donation to COA: \$5.00/class

PLEASE REGISTER TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT

CALL: (413) 296-4007

EMAIL: coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

To learn more about the instructor visit: whirligigstudio.com

WEDNESDAYS (8 sessions) starting January 8th 11:00 AM- 12:00 PM	Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd, Chesterfield, MA 01012
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TRIAD Medical Equipment for Loan

Looking to enhance your safety and well-being? TRIAD, a collaborative community policing initiative, brings together seniors, law enforcement, and service providers. Their mission? To keep our community strong and secure through education and crime prevention.

One of TRIAD's impactful programs is the **Medical Equipment Lending Program.**

This program provides much-needed medical equipment, free of charge, to seniors in Chesterfield. TRIAD will deliver the equipment straight to your door, and pick it up when you've finished using it.

Interested in learning more?

Visit the Hampshire Sheriff's Office website at www.hampshiresheriffs.com/ or call TRIAD Director David Fenton directly at the Hampshire Sheriff's Office.

Together, we can build a safer, more vibrant community for all.

UMass Ice Out Hunger Event



Pictured: At the recent UMASS Ice Out Hunger Hockey game, Lillian Bisbee, a member of the COA Advisory Board, proudly accepted a generous \$500 donation from Florence Bank.

This significant contribution will directly support the Chesterfield COA Food Pantry, ensuring continued access to essential food resources for our community members. We are deeply grateful for Florence Bank's partnership and their unwavering commitment to supporting local food security.

A heartfelt thank you to Lillian Bisbee and her family for their dedication to our community and for representing the COA.

Calling All Lunchtime Heroes!

Want to make a difference in the lives of children at New Hingham Regional Elementary School? We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our lunch supervision team!

Here's what you'll do:

- Help supervise students during recess and lunch (between 12 and 1pm on school days).
- Ensure a safe and fun environment for the kids.
- Maybe even play a game or two!

Why volunteer?

- It's a rewarding way to give back to your community.
- You'll get to interact with energetic and positive students.
- It's a flexible commitment of just one hour a day!



Ready to join the fun?

All volunteers must complete a CORI check, which can be easily facilitated through the school's Main Office. Contact Jess at **(413) 296-0000** or jlilmatainen@hr-k12.org to get started!

Important Information for Chesterfield Veterans

Need Assistance with VA Benefits?

Did you know that Chesterfield has a dedicated Veterans Service Officer (VSO) ready to help you? Our VSO, Dan Nye, is available to assist veterans and their families in obtaining benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other government agencies.

VSOs can assist you with filing claims for disability compensation, pension, education benefits, and can provide information and guidance on VA programs.

Take advantage of this valuable resource!

Meet with Dan Nye on the **third Wednesday of each month from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM** at the Chesterfield Town Offices, 422 Main Road, Chesterfield, MA 01012.

Don't wait – get the support you deserve!

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death

The Living Fully group welcomes new participants. We meet monthly, on the second Tuesday at 1pm, on zoom, to share conversation and support. The emphasis is on staying fully alive as we navigate the aging process. We talk about everything from the practical to the spiritual and just about everything in between.

If you'd like a place to explore with others what you're living through, to share companionship grounded in compassion and authenticity, to laugh, cry, and wonder, this might be the supportive community you're hoping for.

Email annieb@crocker.com or fandellaf@gmail.com to find out more and to be added to our list to receive the zoom link.

Want to get involved with your local food system? Check out the Hilltown Food Council

The Hilltown Food Council aims to support all Hilltown residents to consistently access fresh, healthy, local food regardless of their level of ability or mobility. The HFC works to:



- Increase advertising and outreach to encourage Hilltown residents to interact with the local Hilltown food system, including food access programs.
- Identify gaps in the food access network and increase partnership and collaboration among people, organizations, businesses, and groups to fill those gaps.
- Empower the community to build a resilient food system that fosters strong connections between Hilltown folks, their local food resources, and the health care system.

Interested in joining the Hilltown Food Council? Fill out the interest form by visiting:
<https://bit.ly/hilltownfpc>

New Art Classes With Lena Garcia! Monthly On Saturdays

Come and create at the Saturday Art Workshops. These two hour workshops are geared for beginners and for anyone who would like to try a new medium. All ages are welcome but artists 12 and younger must have an adult participating with them. Art supplies will be provided, but you can feel free to bring your own. Registration is required as space is limited. Please visit www.lenagarcia.com to register.

All workshops are 10am-12pm and located at the Chesterfield Community Center.

- **February 8th - Winter Landscape - Tea and Paint** - Acrylic guided painting with direction for each step of painting.
- **March 15th - Mindful Doodling with Watercolor and Drawing.** Making abstract drawings/paintings with ink and watercolor.
- **April 5th - Springtime Landscape - Tea and Paint** - Acrylic guided painting with direction for each step of painting.
- **May 3rd - Drawing with Oil Pastels** - Create drawings using different techniques with oil pastel.

Special thanks to the Chesterfield Cultural Council and Chesterfield Council on Aging for sponsoring these events.



Happy Birthday in February!

Nancy Recos, Louise Berniche, Marion Baronowski, Elizabeth Smith, Sandra Renaker, Roger Gunn, Louise Hewes, Johanna Adams, James Dilts, Cynthia Berube, Ernest Lyon, Linda Urban-Lyon, Conrad Rosinski, Sylvia Shea-Lapinski, John Chandler, Peter Truomsha, Eleanor Smith, David Pruzynski, John Stein, Margaret McWherter, Robert Scott, Paula Valencik, Patricia Larivee, Judith LeBlank, Karen LaRochr, James Lawson, Nathan Clark, Frank Bisbee, Cassandra Burgess, Thomas LeMire, Craig Pittsinger, Donna McNeight



The Chesterfield Council on Aging benefits from your support for our programs for Chesterfield seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Chesterfield COA. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

(Please make out your check to "Town of Chesterfield" and write "COA programs" in the memo line; mail to Brooke Bullock, Director, Chesterfield COA, PO Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Hilltown Community Health Center Needs Assessment

You know what your community needs, and we want to hear from you! Hilltown Community Health Center is conducting a community health needs assessment to learn what you feel your community needs. This survey takes about 15 minutes to complete. If you have questions or would like to speak in person, please contact Debbie DiStefano at ddistefano@hchcweb.org or by phone at (413) 289-8214. Thank you for your consideration.



www.surveymonkey.com/r/HCHC2025

HVES – Good to Know!

If you don't know about Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES), let me tell you a little bit about them. One of their many programs is Money Management; I have volunteered there for several years and can recommend it.

Here's the deal. The first level of their program sets up assistance for elders who are still able to make financial decisions, but might be having some difficulty dealing with their budget, check book, mail, or bank accounts. A second level of the program has HVES provide supervision of individuals who are unable to manage their own financial affairs. An employee of HVES is appointed to manage participant's government benefits and is responsible for writing and signing checks.

What I do for people in the program at the first level is help sort their mail, write out checks for them to sign, and monitor their bank balances. If needed I will talk to their bank about a problem, and help them access HVES for help with fuel assistance, medical insurance, and other such needs. I'll make sure their credit report has been checked for errors and try to help them avoid scams. It's all designed to make their financial life a bit easier.

For all their programs, check out HVES online at highlandvalley.org/our-services/ or call 413-586-2000 ext. 113. Call me if you have questions about volunteering in the Money Management program.

For financial safety,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com, 413-268-2228

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Open Burning Season began on January 15th and will end on May 1st. You will need a permit from your town's Fire Department, which are given on days when it is safe to burn. It is not safe to burn on windy days or on "red flag" days. The Department of Fire Services recommends the following safe open burning practices:

Senior 
SAFE

- The fire area should be at least 75 feet from any dwelling.
- You can only burn from 10am until 4pm.
- You can burn brush, cane, forest debris, and pruning.
- You cannot burn grass, hay, leaves, stumps, tires or construction material and debris.
- An adult should always be present during the burn.
- Keep children and pets a safe distance from the fire.
- Start the fire with paper and kindling. Never use gasoline or any other flammable liquid.
- Build one small fire at a time and slowly add to it.
- Have fire control tools at hand — shovels, rakes and a pretested water supply.
- Be prepared to extinguish the fire if the wind picks up or the fire weather changes, before the town calls you to put it out.
- The safest time of the year is when the ground is wet, frozen or snowy. There are a whole lot of Red Flag days in April during which open burning is not allowed.
- Be aware that the fire towers are staffed during open burning season and they are quick to identify and call in unsafe burns.
- If the fire begins to get out of hand, immediately call 911 and have the Fire Department handle it before it gets to any buildings or woods.

Have an early and SAFE open burning season!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.

Tech. Help and Training for February



We Are Surviving into the Future!

TechConnect will continue providing services. Although we have fewer trainings going forward, drop-ins and tech support will continue. Please take advantage of ongoing service.

DELIVERING NOW AND ACCEPTING NEW REQUESTS: Internet Hotspots

It's not too late if you need affordable internet access! Have you already requested affordable internet? We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access the internet. Hotspots work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us by phone or email. If you requested affordable internet and were not contacted please reach out to us again.

Calls to **413-296-5080** are now returned and emailing coatechconnect@gmail.com is also a great way to reach us.

Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080** or check the website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org, for locations and time. You can attend drop-in at all locations, except Nash Hill.

Devices for you: PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads and Android tablets

Please remind us if you requested one and are still waiting. There is still time to join the Digital World. Ky Martus continues distributing devices. We have more PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks and iPad and Android tablets. If you need or are waiting for a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device, please contact us. Email coatechconnect@gmail.com, leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Drop in Centers: All are Welcome at Any Location! (no appointment needed)

- Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00
Two Fridays, 11:30-1:30 (2/7 and 2/21)

- Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (2/12)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12pm-2pm (2/20)
- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (2/20)
- Westhampton Library, 1 North Rd. Drop-in tech support, 4th Thurs. 2-4pm (2/27)
- Williamsburg
Meekins Library Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 2/11 from 10 to Noon
Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 2/11 from 10 to Noon
- Worthington: drop-in tech support at COA office. Call COA for date & time: 413-238-5962.

Tech Training:

Must pre-register for training no later than one week before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level. To register, email coaTechTrainer@gmail.com, call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Tech Workshops:

- 2/7, 10:30-11:30 Using Chromebooks
- 2/19, 10-11:30 iPhones (rescheduled from 1/29)
- 2/21, 10:30-11:30 Understanding & Using Zoom

Computer Classes:

No ongoing computer classes are scheduled. An alternate online resource for basic training can be accessed, with help from us, at www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/login/?location=17640-MG8N-techconnect
We can set up your access to this website and help you begin to train yourself for very basic to more advanced beginner digital literacy.



On the Road Again...

2025 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

Day Trip May 6. One day at **Encore Casino**. Free Slot play. Lunch on your own. Restaurants on site. Cost TBD. I need 40 to sign up to make this trip affordable.

Day Trip May 19. **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum & Maggiano's Little Italy**. Enjoy a delicious family-style lunch at Maggiano's. Tour three floors of galleries at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on your own. Price \$144. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by March 24.

Day Trip June 8. **Winnepesaukee Railroad**. Enjoy a complete turkey dinner, prepared by Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant, aboard the train while touring the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. Price \$137. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by April 8.

Multi Day Trip June 22-26. **Montreal & Ottawa. Passports required.** Visit the Biodome, Notre Dame Basilica, Montreal's Underground City, Parliament Hill, Cruise on the St. Lawrence River. Price \$1,052. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by March 26. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **There are a few open seats.**

Day Trip July 16. **FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise**. Take a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy a boxed lunch on board. Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the first Presidential Library. Price \$140. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by May 28.

Day Trip August 3. Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies Lehigh Valley IronPigs** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ballpark-fare buffet are included. Cost \$90.00. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by June 1.

Day Trip Sept. TBD. **The BIG E**, an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage.

Day Trip Oct. 9. **A Chorus Line**. Center orchestra seating for the 50th Anniversary Production on stage at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Lunch at The Gelston House. Price \$177. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by August 1. Note date change.

Multi Day Trip October 12-18. **Biltmore Estate & Smoky Mountains, Asheville, NC**. Seven days, six nights. Visit the Biltmore Estate, the St. Lawrence Basilica, historic Gatlinburg, TN & Asheville, NC. Guided tour of the Smoky Mountains National Park. Price \$1,099. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by July 18. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **As of February 2025, Diamond Tours is expecting this trip to go, despite the hurricane damage around the area. Please stay tuned.**

Day Trip Nov-Dec. **A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA**. Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza--100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at The Chateau Restaurant. Price TBD. Sundays.

Good News for February 2025

It's that time of year when we begin to gather up tax documents, just like 140 million other tax payers. You might add some additional documents for your MA tax return. Massachusetts is one of 25 States to offer the Circuit Breaker Tax refund designed to help low income home owners. **This year the MA Circuit Breaker maximum benefit has increased to \$2,730... so it's worth taking the time to figure out if you are eligible!**

The Circuit Breaker benefit was 'invented' back in the late 1960s. Massachusetts began offering in it the mid-1990s. Now the program has grown to 25 States plus the District of Columbia. Here in New England- Maine, Vermont, and Connecticut- have Circuit Breaker programs. Programs vary from State to State, but all offer a tax refund to seniors who are low income home owners.

To be eligible:

1. You need to be a Massachusetts resident, meaning your primary residence is here, in MA.
2. You need to be 65 or older.
3. Your property tax needs to be more than 10% of your income. EXAMPLE: property tax is \$5,200, income would need to be less than \$52,000/year.
4. You can file for Circuit Breaker in any year(s) that at least one homeowner in the household was 65 or older by December 31st.
5. Your income must be less than \$72,000 single, or \$109,000 married filing jointly. (Each year this income figure changes/increases for cost of living.)
6. Your property cannot be worth more than \$1,172,000 (this figure also increases each year)

To apply:

1. You file a Massachusetts income tax (whether or not you have taxable income) and include a Schedule CB with your tax return.
2. You will need to provide proof of property tax paid. Usually a copy of your property tax bill is sufficient, but they can ask to see cancelled checks to prove payment. (You need to be current with your property tax payments)
3. You can also count 1/2 of your water/sewer bill(s) in which case you would need to include copies of those bills
4. You need to provide income information which includes: taxable income like social security, pension, employment. Gross, not net income. (Circuit breaker does not count one time income like life insurance payments, inheritance, property sale.)

For more information, visit www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit

Chesterfield Council on Aging
400 Main Road, P.O. Box 7
Chesterfield, MA 01012

Chesterfield COA

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Librarian: Dee Cinner
Art Com: Gigi Kaeser, Chair;
Dee Cinner



Brooke Bullock, Director
Jen Peotter, Data/Financial
Accounting Manager
Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit Info Session

Thursday, February 6th from 3-4:30PM

Hilltown CDC, 387 Main Road, Chesterfield (in the conference room)

Presented by Denise LeDuc

DID YOU KNOW seniors over the age of 65 can get a **Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit** on their tax return in **Massachusetts**? Even if you do not need to file a MA tax return- file one and include schedule CB to receive up to the maximum of \$2,730 for 2024. This is a refundable credit, which means even if you do not owe MA taxes you can get this sent money to you. To be considered, 2024 total income for a single cannot exceed \$72,000, head of household \$91,000 and \$109,000 for married filing a joint return. Your property taxes must exceed 10% of your Massachusetts income for the year. If you did not file the CB form you can go back and file for the past three years!

For more information, visit

www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit

ALSO if you are over 70 and meet income requirements you may qualify for some exemptions through the town- you will need to file for this by March 31st annually.

Please join us for this important program!

Questions? Contact Joan Griswold: 413-296-4536 x102