



Chesterfield Council on Aging Newsletter

August 2026

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COA Staff & Leadership

Jess Humphries, Director

Office Hours:

Mondays, 9 AM-5 PM
Wednesdays, 11 AM-4 PM
Thursdays, 12-5 PM

Finance & Program Asst.

Diane LaBarge

COA Advisory Board

Marianne Drake, Chair
Bev Henrichsen, Vice Chair
Francine Frenier, Secretary

Members:

Lillian Bisbee
Lynn Hicks
John Kislo
Jim Martin
Darlene McVeigh
Dee Cinner, Librarian

August Director's Note

Dear readers,

Summer has been a time of preparation here at the COA. As I continue to settle into the Director role, I've been diving deeper into program planning for the fall and winter. I'm thrilled to announce a new **watercolor class starting Thursday, September 10th!** (See details below.) Until then we've got plenty to keep you busy in August.

By popular demand we will have another **men's breakfast on Wednesday, August 12th!** From 8-9 AM former chef and COA Advisory Board member John Kislo will be serving hot homemade breakfast at the COA. Contact us to register!

The last week of August will be a busy one with three events. First, dietitian Brandon Walton will offer a **free food demonstration on yogurt on Monday, August 24th at 12:30 PM.** Stop by for some free samples and recipe ideas!

Second, we'll have another **Lunch & Learn on Wednesday, August 26th at 11:30 AM** focused on ticks. Free lunch and blood pressure checks provided! (See details on p. 4)

Finally, we will end the month with a **Beatles Singalong on Thursday, August 27th at 2 PM.** Join Dan Johnson and fellow Beatles fans for a fun, casual afternoon of singing. (See details on p. 5). Whether at one of these events or around town, I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Jess

Watercolor Classes beginning Sep. 10th, 1-3 PM

Looking for a creative way to kick off the fall season? Join us at the COA for this 8 week series led by instructor Maureen Senn-McNally! Classes will be held every Thursday, 1-3 PM from September 10th through October 29th. Students are asked to provide their own paints, brushes, and watercolor paper, if able. (Please contact the COA if you would like assistance acquiring supplies.)

All skill levels welcome!

Save the Date! LGBTQ+ Lunch on Sep. 23rd at 12 PM

More details to come in the September newsletter.

Register by Sep. 18th to join!

August 2026 Calendar of Events

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30 am Strong Seniors 11:30 am Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	4 Tech Drop-in 11 am-2 pm Mahjong 1 pm Gentle Yoga 3:30 pm	5	6 Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	7 Mahjong 1 pm
10 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30 am Strong Seniors 11:30 am Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	11 Tech Drop-in 11 am-2 pm Mahjong 1 pm Gentle Yoga 3:30 pm	12 Men's Breakfast 8-9 AM <i>Registration required</i>	13 Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	14 Mahjong 1 pm
17 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30 am Strong Seniors 11:30 am Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	18 Chair Yoga 10 am Tech Drop-in 11 am-2 pm Mahjong 1 pm Gentle Yoga 3:30 pm	19	20 Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	21 Mahjong 1 pm
24 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30 am Strong Seniors 11:30 am Grab 'N Go 11:30 am Food Demo 12:30 pm	25 Chair Yoga 10 am Tech Drop-in 11 am-2 pm Mahjong 1 pm Gentle Yoga 3:30 pm Expressive Arts 5 pm	26 Lunch & Learn 11:30 am-1 pm Fiber friends 7 pm	27 Beatles Singalong 2-3 pm Grab 'N Go 11:30 am	28 Mahjong 1 pm
31 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30 am Strong Seniors 11:30 am Grab 'N Go 11:30 am				



August Exercise Programs



Advanced Tai Chi - Mondays 9:30 - 11am. This class practices the 3 parts of the Yang style long form on both the left and right side. There is no formal instruction. New participants are welcome to attend and observe, suggest arriving a few minutes early for introductions and orientation. *Suggested donation \$5.00*

Chair Yoga - Tuesdays 10 - 11am. A modified version of traditional yoga, designed to be practiced while sitting on a chair or using the chair for support during standing poses. This is an ideal exercise for seniors, particularly those with limited mobility, balance issues, or health conditions that render traditional yoga poses challenging. The practice includes gentle stretching, strengthening exercises, and focused breathing. We keep it simple and fun, always time to share some laughs. *Suggested donation \$5.00*

Strong Seniors: Mondays 11:30am-12:30pm. Weight training for all abilities to strengthen and condition. Bring a yoga mat if you have one - some mats available at the COA. *Suggested donation \$5.00*

Gentle Yoga: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30pm. Please join instructor Michelle Ryan for this series. Bring your own mat or props you might need. (The COA has some available for use). *Suggested donation \$5.00*

Please remember to register each month for Programs and Classes!

Register online at
[https://www.townofchesterfieldma.com/
council-aging](https://www.townofchesterfieldma.com/council-aging)

OR

By phone or email at
413-296-4007 or
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Northern Hilltowns Consortium

Chesterfield is a member of the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of Councils on Aging.

The consortium is a collaborative that includes the town Councils on Aging of Williamsburg, Westhampton, Chesterfield, Worthington, Cummington and Plainfield.

**Residents of the Hilltowns are welcome
to attend events at any of the**

Consortium COAs. For more information, including a calendar of events, check out the website!

www.northernhilltownscoas.org

August Special Programs

Men's Breakfast - Wednesday, August 12th, 8-9 AM

Men's breakfast is back! Join us at the COA for a morning of fellowship and delicious food. COA Advisory Board member and former Hilton chef John Kislo will be cooking up hot and fresh breakfast on site.



Register by August 10th (online or by phone or email) to join!
There is no fee to attend.

John and guests enjoying their meal at the July 15th breakfast

Expressive Arts Group - Tuesday, August 25th, 5-6:30 PM

This monthly group for grieving adults offers a safe space to make a visual response to prompts using collage. There are no limits on how, when, or where the person passed away. For some, the word "art" can be scary, but don't worry. Please know that this group isn't about what you make, instead it's about y-o-u-r individual and unique process. This group is led by Shelly Lenn, Cooley Dickinson Hospice Bereavement Coordinator.



Mass General Brigham

Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice

Lunch & Learn: Ticks Wednesday, August 26th, 11:30 AM-1 PM

Join us at the COA to learn about ticks with Public Health Nurse Kelly Hughes. Massachusetts is experiencing a severe tick season, and tick-borne diseases are especially dangerous for older adults. Come learn how to prevent and catch tick bites early! **Free lunch and blood pressure checks provided!**



More June Programs!



Fiber Friends - Wednesday, August 26th, 7 PM

Calling all fiber craft enthusiasts! Do you knit, crochet, needle point, embroider, cross-stitch, tat, rug hook, spin, weave, quilt, sew, felt, macrame? Join us for opportunities to learn from each other and build friendships. All levels of experience are welcome! Bring your current WIP (work in progress), or start something new! Last Wednesday of the month at the COA.

Questions? Email Jeane Anastas at jwa1@nyu.edu or Trish Colson-Montgomery at trishcolson@gmail.com.

Beatles Singalong - Thursday, August 27th, 2 PM

Brighten your week with some musical medicine. Bring your voice and a sense of fun. Instrumentalists, bring your instruments. No experience needed, just a love of Beatles music! This is a no judgment zone. Lyrics and guitar & piano accompaniment provided.

A Special Thank You from Nanette Clark

Thank You Chesterfield

I have never written such a large thank you note. My award and the Boston Post Cane were a complete surprise for me. I now know many people were involved in making this happen, including my children and various friends who did amazing research. Nobody let it slip to me!! I cherish fond memories of all the “fuss and feathers”; the colorful sash and corsage and heartfelt speeches. Thanks ever-so-much from the depths of my Chesterfield heart to all of your Chesterfield hearts.

Nanette Andre Clark



Resources

Foot Nurse

The COA offers a foot clinic with Piper Sagan, RN every other month. **The next clinic will be on Monday, September 14th with appointments available from 10 AM-12 PM.** The cost is \$50 for Chesterfield residents and \$60 for non-residents.

Contact the COA for an appointment: 413-296-4007 or coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Caregiver Support

The Huntington Council on Aging offers information and support services for caregivers. **A weekly support group is held on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. at Stanton Hall** as part of the Hilltown Memory Cafe.

For more information please contact Crystal Wright-Partyka at 413-685-5283 or caregiveroutreach@huntingtonma.us

This program is made possible in part by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act

Hampshire Elder Law Program (HELP)

This program by the Hampshire County Bar Association provides civil legal services at no cost to low-income seniors, 60 years of age and older. Services include bankruptcy, consumer protection, guardianship, health care proxies, powers of attorney, probate of estates, and wills.

For more information, contact the Hampshire County Bar Association at (413) 586- 8729 or hcba@crocker.com

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)

The SHINE Program provides free health insurance information, counseling, and assistance to people who are eligible for Medicare.

For more information contact Caroline Solan at Highland Valley Elder Services: 413-586-2000 ext. 999 (option 2) or csolan@lifepathma.org

Resources, cont.

Hilltown Elder Network (HEN) Program

This program provides eligible seniors with in-home services, such as home chores or transportation assistance. Seniors must be at least 62 years old, meet household income criteria, and be ineligible for other forms of assistance.

For more information, please contact Helen Pelletier at 413-238-4418.

TRIAD Medical Equipment

This program provides used medical equipment pick-up and delivery free of charge to seniors in Chesterfield. Interested in learning more? Visit the Hampshire County Sheriff's Official website at www.hampshiresheriffs.com/ or call 413-582-7787.

Hilltown Easy Ride Van

This program serves seniors over 60 residing in Chesterfield and other hilltowns. Services include regularly scheduled shopping trips to Northampton and rides to medical appointments. **Interested riders must be pre-approved for eligibility.**

For more information or to apply visit <https://www.hilltowncdc.org/transportation> or call 413-296-4232.

Your Community Connector

Jennifer O'Connell is working for the Hilltown COAs as the Community Connector. She is available to help Hilltown residents who are experiencing challenges, hardship and/or need assistance. Jennifer can help you meet a variety of your needs to make life easier. Some examples are assistance with:

- Benefits such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security, etc.
- Living independently at home
- Arranging for repairs
- Connecting to local groups
- Activities to have fun with others
- Transportation
- Discussing what you may need

Any and all inquiries are welcome.

Call Jennifer at 413-296-4536 ext.110 or email communityconnectjo@gmail.com

The Community Connector program is made possible by Title III Funding from Highland Valley Elder Services.

GOOD NEWS FOR AUGUST 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

I'm going to take a stab at trying to clear up some confusion about the Medicare Savings Program that many of you have applied for and gotten. It's been 2 years now since Massachusetts dropped the asset limit and now determines eligibility based on income alone. This was a huge change for this Federal program.

Only 12 states have dropped the asset requirement.

MSP (Medicare Savings Program) is a Federal program which:

1. Pays your Medicare B premium
2. Automatically enrolls you in the Extra Help program which subsidizes the premiums and co-pays for your Rx, and
3. Automatically makes you eligible for Health Safety Net which gives you free care at any federally funded clinic or hospital.

MSP is administered by MassHealth, which is where the confusion may start. If approved, you get a letter from MassHealth. MSP is not a MassHealth program, but you are given a MassHealth ID number and once a year, they send you a recertification application (looks just like the 2 page MSP application you filled out originally). In order to keep your MSP, you need to complete and return that paperwork to MassHealth.

The Extra Help program that you were automatically approved for when you got MSP is administered by social security. Fortunately, they don't require recertification every year. Extra Help automatically enrolls you in a Medicare D plan and pays the premium. And when you go to the pharmacy to pick up your prescription, the pleasant surprise is that co-pays are very low for generics and no more

than \$12.50 for any brand-name Rx. The beauty of Extra Help is that enrollment in a Medicare D plan happens automatically without your having to do anything. And as long as you keep your MSP you will keep your Extra Help.

So where's the confusion?

1. I get calls from folks who say, "I never applied for this Medicare D plan? So how did I get one?"

It happened automatically...and if you don't like what you were assigned, you can switch. (A SHINE counselor can help with that.)

2. I get folks asking why they have a MassHealth ID number if they didn't enroll in MassHealth? And medical providers seeing your MassHealth ID number in the system may say "Oh, I see you have MassHealth?" To which you should answer, "No I don't have MassHealth, I have the Medicare Savings Program which is a Federal program that subsidizes my Medicare". Even your doctor's office may not understand the difference.

3. Some folks that are approved for MSP have a low enough income to qualify for the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program, and those MSP folks will be mailed a MassHealth ID card. Don't throw it out! QMB folks have an added benefit that pays any/all co-pays from medical providers. So, if you receive a MassHealth card in the mail, show it to your doctor, and make sure they have it in your medical record.

Questions? Call your SHINE counselor at Highland Valley Elder Services, Caroline Solan, 586-2000.

On the Road Again... TRIPS IN 2026



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat BEFORE mailing payments.

For more info call **413-296-4291**

Email: francine.frenier@gmail.com

Mail: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096

Day Trip September 28: Frankie Avalon at The Big E. An annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage. Frankie Avalon performs his hits. Cost \$18 for Northampton Seniors, all other seniors \$20. Make your check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to the address above. Due Now. NO REFUNDS due to bargain price. The bus leaves from Sheldon Field.

NEW Day Trip October 12: Worthington COA Fall Foliage Bus Trip. Hudson River Narrated Cruise aboard the Rip Van Winkle II, choice of gourmet boxed lunch on board, and Market stop. Discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$140 for other seniors. Call Phyllis 413-238-5962 or email coa@worthington-ma.us for details & to reserve a seat by September 1st.

Day Trip December 8th: Merry Christmazz Holiday Variety Show. Jimmy Mazz performs seasonal traditional and contemporary tunes from various artists. Yankee Pot Roast lunch and show at Storowton's Carriage House, W. Springfield. A drive through Bright Nights follows. Make an \$80 check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by October 6, 2026. Wait list only.



TECH HELP FOR AUGUST

Tech Support home visit is available by appointment. Call or message 413-296-5080 to arrange a home visit.

Devices for you: Refurbished PC laptops if you are looking for a free refurbished laptop or iPad, please call 413-296-5080 and leave us a message. We will offer free devices while our supply lasts. If you have received a device from us and are not using it, please call our number to arrange a return so someone else can use it.

Drop-in Centers (*no appointment needed*)
Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.
Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from 12:00 to 2:00, 3 rd Thursday, 7/16

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from 2:00 to 4:00, 4 th Thursday 7/23

Williamsburg

Meekins Library Drop-In tech support (call library for latest information)

Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 7/14

Worthington tech support - contact Eileen Daneri eadaneri@gmail.com.





Seniors Aware of Fire Education: Summer Heat Safety

Summer heat can be dangerous, especially for older adults. Heat related illnesses can develop quickly and become life threatening if not recognized and treated early. Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses too much water and salt through sweating. **Signs of heat exhaustion may include:**

- heavy sweating
- weakness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- muscle cramps
- cool, clammy skin.

If someone is experiencing heat exhaustion:

- move them to a cool place
- offer water or a sports drink
- loosen clothing
- apply cool wet cloths to help lower body temperature.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. **Signs of heat stroke include:**

- confusion
- slurred speech
- hot dry skin
- seizures
- loss of consciousness.

If someone is experiencing heat stroke, call 911 immediately and begin cooling the person while waiting for help.

During hot weather remember to:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day.
- Wear lightweight clothing.
- Stay in air conditioned spaces when possible.
- Check on neighbors, friends, and family members.

Stay cool, stay hydrated, and stay S.A.F.E. this summer!

Capt. Steve Estelle, SAFE Educator
Goshen Fire Department

SCAM ALERT!

If you get a text message you weren't expecting, **it could be a scam!** What it looks like:

- A message saying there's a problem with payment information.
- An alert about suspicious charges to a bank account or a credit card.
- A package delivery notification.
- An invoice for unpaid tolls or traffic tickets.
- A notice for failure to report to jury duty.
- A bill for an expensive product or service you didn't order.
- A random message from a number you don't recognize or someone you don't know.

What to do: Don't reply. Slow down and verify the information independently. Block and report suspicious messages.

Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit

Northampton
(413) 586-9225

Greenfield
(413) 774-3186

Working in cooperation with the Office of
the Massachusetts Attorney General

