

Cummington Council on Aging

February 2018 Newsletter



Cummington Council on Aging
P.O. Box 95,
Cummington, MA 01026

Anne Parsons, Director
413-634-2262
coa@cummington-ma.gov
Hours: Tuesday 2pm-5pm
Wednesday 9am-12pm

Events: February 2018

Monday:

Healthy Bones / Balance	9:30—10:30am
Coffee Hour	10:30— 11:30am
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00 -11:00am
Board of Assessors Assistant	9:30 -11:30am
Veteran's Agent	2:00 - 4:00pm
Bryant Library	6:00 - 9:00pm

Tuesday:

COA Office Hours	2:00 – 5:00pm
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00 -11:00am
Discussion Group (2/13)	1:00 -3:00pm
in Comm. House Lib.	
Feb. 20: COA Potluck Lunch	Noon
Board of Health mtg	7:00pm
1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays	

Wednesday:

COA Office Hours	9:00am -12pm
Tap Dancing	3:00-4:00pm
Compactor	5:30 -7:30pm
Bryant Library	6:00 - 9:00pm

Thursday:

Healthy Bones / Balance	9:30 -10:30am
Feb. 1: COA Board	10:30am
Town Clerk	4:00 -7:30pm
Building Inspector	6:00 - 8:00pm
Board of Assessors meeting	6:30pm
2 nd & 4 th Thursdays	
Selectboard	7:00pm

Saturday:

Compactor	7:00 -11:00am
Bryant Library	8:30 -12:30pm

Board of Directors will meet on
Thursday, February 1st at 10:30am.

Your COA board members are:

Elliot Ring, Chairman (634-5666)
Worth Noyes, Recording Secretary (634-8003)
Peg Daniels, Corresponding Secretary (634-2229)
Kathy Knox (634-8041)
Nancy Cole (634-8080)
Anne Parsons, Director (634-5707)

Note: We are always looking for volunteers to join the board. Won't you consider joining?

February Potluck

Tues. February 20th at Noon
Community House

You're in for a treat! We're going to show the short movie "Only One Cum-mington". We look forward to you sharing your stories about our little town in the hills of Western Massachusetts. Weather permitting, the potluck will be at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, February 20th. That's school vacation week so you won't see school cancellations on the television, radio or internet. If the weather is really bad, use your best judgment in whether it's safe for you to be out.



Robin Laferriere will be here prior to the luncheon for blood pressure checks.

Cancellations Due to Weather

Should we have bad weather on the day of our

luncheon, a Monday or Thursday exercise class, or Monday coffee hour, we will follow the Central Berkshire Regional School District's cancellations. So if you're not sure if the activity will be held, check on the NBC TV network, the radio, or internet. If it's a two hour delay, we will have the activity. However, please use your judgement in whether it is safe for YOU to be on the road.

Do you need one?

We have two people in town who have a hospital bed that you can have if you need one. We don't store them here in the Community House, you'll have to contact the people below:

Dale Hoag at 634-2204. This bed is electric, so it will go up and down, however, it comes without a mattress.

Stephen Philbrick at the West Cummington Church: 634-2100. This bed is also electric and they are willing to deliver.

Did you know that at the Community House we store certain medical items that residents can borrow when in need? They include: walkers, rollators, canes, crutches, bath/shower chairs, raised toilet seats, and commodes. We also take donations of these items that are in good working order.

Did you get your newsletter by regular mail but would prefer it come via email? Please send your email address to coa@cummington-ma.gov and we'll put you on our email list. Thank you!

Tax Season

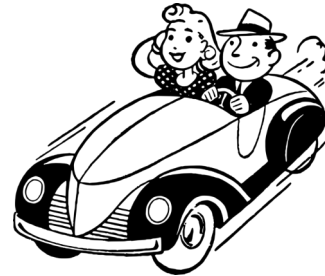
Yes, it's here! We're looking for someone(s) who has experience and who is willing to help our older residents with tax filing. If that is you, or you know of someone who might be willing to offer their time, please call the COA office at 634-2262.

Were you able to stay warm?

We had some wicked weather at the end of the year. The Hilltown Community Development Corporation has a program for housing rehabilitation for those who meet their eligibility requirements. They replace windows, doors, roofs, insulate homes and can help with heating systems. Their offices are on Main Road in Chesterfield. It might be worth a call: 413-296-4536 x123. Please see article on page 4.

Neighbor to Neighbor Ride Program

We are in desperate need of drivers for our Neighbor to Neighbor ride program. This program provides rides to doctor appointments, pharmacy needs, and, if the funds are available, for grocery shopping. Drivers receive \$20 for each ride provided. We greatly appreciate the donations received that subsidize these rides.



The Cummington Council on Aging says thank you to our Generous Supporters!

If you haven't already, won't you please consider making a contribution? Your help will support our monthly newsletter and our Neighbor to Neighbor transportation program. Many of the folks receiving these services would be isolated without our help. If you would like to make a donation, please fill out the form below and send it with your check made out to the Cummington Council on Aging and write "program support" in the memo line. We thank everyone for their continuing support. ~ Anne Parsons

The Cummington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue our important programs for local seniors!

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

Name _____

Address _____

Thank you for helping to Support Your Neighbors!

The Cummington Council on Aging



Regional News

Outreach in the Hilltowns: Progress to date

By Peg Whalen
Regional Outreach Coordinator for the
Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs Service Incentive Grant supports COAs as they expand senior outreach in the hilltowns. We will be reporting outreach progress and the state of outreach in each town. This month we report on Plainfield.

The Plainfield Council on Aging and the town-based Plainfield Cares organization are serving roughly 250 town seniors. The Plainfield Council on Aging has added three board members including two from Plainfield Cares. Plainfield Cares is a volunteer organization created in 2016 and continues into a third year of support for residents. Plainfield COA nutrition outreach continues with Plainfield’s COA luncheon twice a month – the only northern hilltown offering meals and social contacts twice a month.

Plainfield Cares offers short-term/transitional assistance for people returning to town after illness, injury or surgery. Care includes coordinating meals, helping with basic tasks, arranging company, doing pet care, and meeting other time-limited needs. Volunteers also are available to take residents to medical appointments, treatment, and meet other needs for rides. Additionally, the organization supports library use like rides to the library, book return or reading pickup. Outreach includes volunteers calling every senior to talk or meet and arrange delivery of information seniors need for safely ageing-in-place in Plainfield. Several residents have enjoyed conversations with callers and gotten detailed Plainfield-specific information and resource packets. There are enough information packets for seniors of any age.

Packets also are available for viewing at the library.

The COA urges residents to request an information packet, attend lunch, or talk with a volunteer by phone or at a convenient home visit. Even if you don’t need assistance yourself, you can become an informed neighbor or friend able to share information or offer suggestions to people you quietly watch out for or already are helping.

FY18 Housing Rehab Program

Hilltown CDC will be submitting a grant application for FY18 to continue the Housing Rehab Program for the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Peru, Plainfield, and Worthington. If you have used the Housing Rehab Program in the past or would like to use it in the future, we’d like to hear from you.

We welcome your ideas, suggestions, or input about the design of the program and how we could improve the overall effectiveness of our services. Please call or email your comments no later than February 9, 2018. We look forward to your input. If you’re interested in applying for the Housing Rehab Program, please be sure to request an application when calling or emailing.

Contact Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org for more information or an application to the program.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.

Surely I don’t really need to check...

Here is one more credit report note, then I promise I’ll change topics. For a while.

I’ve had a couple people ask if they really need to check their credit report if they don’t use a credit card or they aren’t going to make a big purchase. Short answer – yup.

Long answers – A credit report may contain items other than credit cards such as some debit or gas cards, mortgages, car loans, medical accounts, telephone plans, public records, and who is accessing your report. Keeping up with your credit reports can help you avoid identity theft, assure a family member hasn’t messed you up, fix errors, and learn how to improve your credit score. With a better score, you may be able to get or negotiate lower rates (insurance, loans, rentals) or get a higher credit limit to help fund a small business.

Here’s a shocker: if a thief gets ahold of your identity and charges his family’s phone plan to it, or her medical bills, it won’t be him or her who has to straighten out the mess. The mess can be straightened out, but the process is not something you will enjoy doing.

Another shocker – long ago, when I was learning how to be an adult, there was no need to know about credit reports and scores! Life is different now. As always, if what I write can help you help someone else, feel free to use these notes.

Cheers,
Jean O’Neil, TRIAD Committee Member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Become a VITA Volunteer!

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program

The Hilltown CDC is partnering with the Berkshire County United Way to bring VITA to the Hilltowns of Western Massachusetts, and is seeking volunteers to help low-to-moderate income individuals in preparing tax returns.

VITA offers FREE basic tax return preparation by IRS-certified individuals, with electronic filing to qualified households that make \$54,000 or less. By volunteering for just a few hours a week from early February to mid April, you could help to provide THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS in benefits for working, income-eligible individuals and families in Western Massachusetts. The VITA Program offers **free tax help** to income eligible individuals to build assets and gain access to financial resources that will enrich their lives.

No experience necessary – All volunteers will receive training and materials appropriate for their position. Specific training dates will take place beginning in January of 2018. **No risk**- Volunteers are

covered under the Volunteer Protection Act and are not accountable for tax returns filed to the IRS.

Volunteer Positions available:

- **Greeters**

As a Greeter, you will create a welcoming atmosphere at VITA sites while also helping to check in families and individuals accessing VITA services. While tax training is not required for greeters, a positive attitude is critical to being effective in this important role.

- **Tax Preparers**

Are you good with numbers, computers, and forms? Tax preparers work with filers to prepare their federal and state income tax returns. Volunteers receive free, in-depth training and must pass an IRS certification test.

Helping with the VITA program can be rewarding while serving a vital role in our community. To find out more, please leave a message for Program Coordinator Assistant, Lisa Westervelt, at the Hilltown CDC at 413-296-4536, extension 100, or email at LisaW@hilltownCDC.org

Need help with your housing repairs?

Hilltown CDC received funding for the FY17 Housing Rehab Program, and we're currently applying for the FY18 Housing Rehab Grant. We're accepting applications from homeowners who live in **Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Peru, and Worthington** who need help with their housing repairs. Here's a sample of some the work that can be performed under the Housing Rehab Program:

HOUSEHOLD INCOME GUIDELINES/ LIMITS:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Gross Annual Income</u>
1	\$44,800
2	\$51,200
3	\$57,600
4	\$64,000
5	\$69,150
6	\$74,250
7	\$79,400
8	\$86,750

Possible Repairs:

Siding	Roofs and Chimneys
Windows, Doors, and Siding	Floor Joists, Flooring
Insulation, Walls, Ceilings	Foundation Work
Septic Systems and Sewer Tie-in's	
Handicap Accessibility Work	
Plumbing and Electrical	
Wells, Pumps, and Hot Water Tanks	
Lead Paint Removal	
Asbestos Removal	

These are **NO interest/NO payment loans** which may be entirely forgiven, and all repair work is completed by a licensed contractor of your choice. Please don't delay, funding is available and you may be surprised to find out you qualify! Contact Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org for more information and an application.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.



On the Go!

The Northampton Senior Center has arranged the following outings, and you are welcome to join!



Please make your reservations early as these trips fill up fast! **Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.**

April 20- Friday: Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, a unique museum filled with 10 rooms of Polish history, emigration and culture. Located in Chicopee. Enjoy a German-fare lunch on your own at the Munich House prior to the museum stop. Sign up early, seats are limited. Cost is \$36.

April 26- Thursday: Sister Act, a musical comedy, will be performed at Westchester Theater in Elmsford, NY. A full luncheon is included. Cost is \$125. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by March 15.

May 8- Tuesday: Maggiano's Cooking Demo & Lunch, and JFK Library Centennial Celebration. Learn tricks of the trade and enjoy a 3 course family-style luncheon. Then visit the JFK Library for its 100th celebration exhibit. Cost is \$114. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by March 27.

May 25-June 4 : Mt. Rushmore and the Black Hills of South Dakota, 11 days, via bus, \$950 with double occupancy. Roommates available. Fourteen attractions and sites galore. Pay in installments or pay in full by Feb. 1 and receive a \$25 discount. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

June 21-Thursday: The Gilded Age of the Berkshires. Tour Ventfort Hall and The Mount. Buffet lunch on terrace at The Mount. Cost is \$112. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by May 7.

June 26-28: Three Day Tour to Lancaster, PA. Two shows, *Jesus* at Sight & Sound Theater and *The Wizard of Oz* at Dutch Apple Dinner Theater and more. \$434 with double occupancy. Pay in installments or pay in full by April 5th and receive a \$25 discount. \$50 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

July 10 - Tuesday: Tour of Mark Twain Home and Wickham Gardens. Lunch at Promenade Shops on your own. Cost is \$74. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 1.

July 24 - Tuesday: Best of Boston. Duck Boat Tour, lunch on your own at Quincy Market and

New England Aquarium. Cost is \$109. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 12.

August 7 -Tuesday: Tour of Fenway Park and Lunch at Cheers. Enjoy some free time in Boston. Cost is \$123. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by July 1.

Sept. 7-11: Washington D.C., 5 days, via bus, \$540 with double occupancy. Full day at the Smithsonian. Pay in installments or pay in full by June 1 and receive a \$25 discount. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

Dec. 10- Monday: White Christmas Big Band show and luncheon at Aqua Turf, Plantsville, CT. Rob Zappulla and his 13-piece Big Band will perform holiday favorites. Cost is \$102. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by October 30.

Dec. 17- Monday: The nostalgic holiday favorite, A Christmas Carol is performed at The Bushnell. A pre-show luncheon at Aqua Turf, Plantsville, CT. is included. The all-inclusive price is \$106. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by October 30.

Coming to the Bushnell Hartford, Ct.
HAMILTON--date to be determined.
(probably late 2018 early 2019)

Spa Days at Smith Vocational

Come enjoy some pampering! Smith Voc seniors from the Cosmetology program are offering the following:

- Shampoo, cut & style \$5.00
- Manicure \$4.00
- Pedicure \$8.00
- Basic Facial \$8.00



Spa Days will be on the following Fridays: **Feb. 9, Mar. 16, Apr. 13 and May 18**, in Room 124 of Building A at the school. To enable the students to prepare for the specific services, **please call 413-296-4007 to make an appointment.** Each appointment takes about an hour and are scheduled for 9 am and 10 am. Following the Spa Day, enjoy lunch at the Oliver Smith Restaurant!

Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list.

Cummington Council on Aging
P.O. Box 95
Cummington, MA 01026

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

**Cummington
Council on Aging**

Anne Parsons, Coordinator
634-5707

Elliot Ring, Chairman
634-5666

Worth Noyes, 634-8003

Peg Daniels, 634-2229

Kathy Knox, 634-8041

Nancy Cole, 634-8080

Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

The Cummington COA Newsletter has been funded in part by: generous donations, The Town of Cummington, and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Out and About in February

Thurs. Feb 15th at 2pm
Snow date Thurs. Feb 22nd at 2pm
Need a Ramp?

Easthampton Council on Aging
19 Union St. Easthampton



Do you need a ramp to get in and out of your home? Do you know someone who does? For many, the expense and effort of hiring a contractor are daunting. Stavros's Home Sweet Home program is designed to help seniors and people with limited mobility have ramps installed. Home Sweet Home program staff assess needs, provide help with financing, and oversee installation. Come to the Easthampton Council on Aging to hear a presentation by Home Sweet Home program director Lois Brown, who will talk about the best way to contact her program, financing options, and more, with time for questions afterwards. **RSVP: 413-527-6151.**

Sun. Feb 18th at 2pm
Contemplating Common Creatures
by Fran Ryan
Chesterfield Comm. Center, 400 Main Rd.
Chesterfield, MA

In this Horizon Production presentation, environmental educator, Fran Ryan, will reveal the secret lives of the Eastern chipmunk, the Eastern gray squirrel and the meadow vole. We will discuss their characteristics, behaviors, lifecycles and shed some light on these creatures with whom we share our world.

While many of us know a little something about those "charismatic species," like bears, big cats, wolves and whales - the big stars of the wild kingdom- these little guys just don't get a lot of press. Their stories, however, are just as fascinating.



Come and get a peek into the lives of these interesting furry neighbors and see what makes them tick, and how best to live happily along side them.

Funded in part by a multigenerational grant awarded by Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield COA, which coordinates these programs in partnership with: the Westhampton COA, Chesterfield Public Library, CFCEs of Westhampton and Chesterfield, Davenport Childcare, and New Hingham PTO.

