

Cummington Council on Aging

March 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: March 2018

Monday:

Healthy Bones / Balance Coffee Hour	9:30—10:30am 10:30— 11:30am
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00 -11:00am
Board of Assessors Assistant	9:30 -11:30am
Veterans' 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
Living Fully, Aging Gracefully and Befriending Death Discussion Group (3/13) in Comm. House Lib.	1:00 -3:00pm

March 20: COA Potluck Lunch	Noon
Board of Health mtg 1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays	7:00pm

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 March 1: COA Board	9:30 -10:30am
Town Clerk	11am
Building Inspector	4:00 -7:30pm
Board of Assessors meeting	6:00 - 8:00pm
2 nd & 4 th Thursdays	6:30pm
Selectboard	7:00pm

Saturday:

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

Board of Directors will meet on
Thursday, March 1st at 11am.

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 and/or our Neighbor to Neighbor Ride Program. Won't you consider offering your time?

Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

**Tues. March 20th at Noon
Community House**



March is one of those months where the COA board members work to provide a special meal. This will be our corned beef and cabbage meal! Folks are asked to bring desserts or anything you feel will go good with this meal. Robin will be here prior to the luncheon for blood pressure checks.

For Sale!

If your New Year's resolution included getting more exercise, there is an exercise bike (Body Rider / Dual Trainer) available for \$75. Call Diane at 634-0167 (no calls after 7:00 pm).

Dementia - Friendly Massachusetts

Massachusetts is one of only two states in the country that has been named such. Massachusetts Council on Aging (MCOA) is assuming the lead role in this initiative with funding from Tufts Health Plan Foundation. In our state alone, more than 120,000 residents are living with dementia (which is a general term for Alzheimer's disease), changes in thinking such as memory loss, and difficulty planning and communicating. A "dementia friendly community" is informed, safe, respectful, and enables people living with dementia and those who care about them to live full, engaged lives. MCOA is building upon the work of the Age-Friendly movement, which benefits people of all ages by supporting community standards for inclusion, access, safety and engagement. In this way, communities that are age-friendly and dementia-friendly embrace everyone: younger people, older people, individuals with and without dementia, and individuals with disabilities of all kinds. Stay tuned.

March Birthdays

June Ferrin, Julia Aldrich, Charles Stickney, Bruce Drummond Larkin, James Martin, Margaret Jeanne Johns-Thomas, Joyce Morin, Janet Martin, Eli Martin Schotz, Nathan Abraham, Joyce Wiernasz, Alan Weisman, Thomas Dyer, Jane Dyer, Charlene Madison Cassidy, Lawrence Remby, Kathryn Jensen, David Owen, Russell Sears, Murray Solomon, Linda Edwards, Scott Keith, John Bye, Donna Gibson, Leslie Ferrin, Susan Mikula, and Christine Knox.

Wishing you all a great year!

Road Trip...

Mount Holyoke College will have their 47th Annual Spring Flower Show in March. You ask when? The show runs from March 3rd to 18th. Our plan is to see it on **Tuesday March 6th (snow date is March 13th)**. If you're interested in a day trip to the show, please call the COA office to sign up (634-2262). We will have 2 cars (we'll find more if we need to) that will bring us to South Hadley. Plan on having lunch out. We will leave the Village Church parking lot at 9:30am so please be there by 9:20. This is not just for the ladies, men are invited too!



Spring Cleaning

Spring will be here on March 20th, the day of our potluck. Flowers will be blooming (hopefully) and the birds serenading. Are you ready to give up those winter blues? Here are a few items you may want to put on your "to do" list. And remember, things don't need to be done "right away"! Kitchen, bathrooms, living areas and bedrooms can be tackled one week at a time (or one month at a time). One of the biggest parts of spring cleaning is getting rid of clutter that you don't need. Start by taking a few minutes to survey each room to identify areas you want to tackle. Write them down. Don't forget to check out drawers and closets. What about the outside? Is there a little or a lot of clean-up there to be done as well? This might be just the opportunity for you to look closer at the "Community Credits Program". They may have teens and/or adults willing to give you a helping hand. Speak with Lorrie Childs at 296-4742 to see if they have a person who has signed up for what you need!

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.

(Please write your check to the Cummington Council on Aging, and mail to Cummington COA, PO Box 95, Cummington, MA 01026)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank you for helping to Support Your Neighbors!



Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



The number one fire safety item in your house is your smoke detector. It does save lives. In a typical home, fire, smoke, heat and toxic gases build up rapidly. So, when a smoke alarm sounds, get out of the building immediately before your escape route is blocked. Make sure you:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your house and in each bedroom.
- Test them monthly.
- Replace the battery twice a year.
- Check on the back of the detector for its age. If it is 10 or more years old, replace it with a new one which will have a 10 year battery. Smoke alarms do wear out, so replace them.
- Never ever disable your smoke detector. The life you save will be your own.

Be SAFE!

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

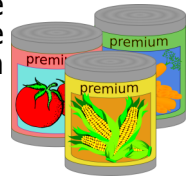
The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Hilltown Food Pantry

The Hilltown Food Pantry, run under the auspices of the Northampton Survival Center, is located on the bottom floor of the town office building in Goshen. The pantry is open to people in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. Hours are Wednesdays from 1pm-3pm, and, on the third Wednesday, there are extended hours: 1pm-6pm. During the winter months, the pantry closes if the Hampshire Regional School District closes.

Diane Meehan is the director of the food pantry. If you have any questions, the pantry's phone number is 413-268-7578, and will be answered on Wednesdays, otherwise the call goes to the Northampton Survival Center.

Donations of non perishable items, personal care items and paper products are always welcome and appreciated. In-season produce is also helpful. Someone is available at the food pantry after 10am on Wednesdays for donation drop-offs.



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.

Finally – new Medicare cards!

At long last, people on Medicare will be getting new identity cards with a new number. If you haven't reached that magic age yet, please know that a person's current Medicare number is their social security number followed by one or two characters. The characters don't exactly disguise the number, so if you carry your Medicare card, which you may need now and again, you are also carrying your social security number! And that, of course, is a big no-no because of identity theft.

New cards will be mailed starting in April 2018. Some cards may not show up for a while because there are a lot of us who will be receiving them; the government has allowed itself a year.

Now this will be a shocker: there are likely scammers out there who will call and try to trip you up. They might tell you that a fee is required for the card, that more personal information is needed before the card can be mailed, or that your benefits will be stopped until you provide more information. All not true. Just hang up.

Your new Medicare number, called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier, will still need to be protected to ensure your privacy and security. Make sure you know who you are sharing it with.

The office sending the cards is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS says if someone calls and asks for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Turn 'em in.

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

Outreach in Cummington continues to expand

By Peg Whalen

Regional Outreach Coordinator for the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

The Cummington Council on Aging is reaching out to over 300 town seniors. COA board members continue functioning as the primary outreach team, respectfully and regularly watching out for the wellbeing of residents that may be isolated or have special vulnerabilities.

Cummington's COA is the only hilltown board that maintains a specific council position of Corresponding Secretary. In this role, Peg sends cards of support or condolence. The entire COA board identifies people that are ill or families that have recently lost a senior. Birthday cards also go out to residents 80 and over.

Their COA Neighbor to Neighbor ride program provides non-driving seniors with access to transportation by matching volunteers with seniors needing rides to appointments. Early expansion of outreach included a discussion of the book *Being Mortal*, which continued beyond the group meetings. Several book group participants have continued meeting about issues reflected in the group's name: "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, and Befriending Death". In successive months, the group focuses on "living fully" the first month, "aging gracefully" the second month and "befriending death" the third month, and then repeats the cycle. The discussion group is open to all ages. Participants have come from Holyoke, Williamsburg, Hinsdale, Plainfield and Chesterfield, among others. They meet once a month on the 2nd Tuesday from 1pm to 3pm in the Community House Library room.

Most recently, the Cummington COA initiated contact with younger seniors aged 60 to 69. This growing group of seniors received a personal letter introducing the COA, which invited input and participation. The letter was shared with area COAs. Several neighboring towns are using this approach as an outreach tool to engage younger seniors.

Several book and discussion participants and others have formed Cummington Community Cares, a newly organized town volunteer group, open to all. The initial group includes roughly 20 participants. The group's purpose is to establish a program that strengthens the ability of the people of Cummington to care for each other in the face of disasters and emergencies- large or small, community-wide or personal. The group is exploring what community preparedness involves and how residents can effectively care for each other. Another small group of volunteers is looking at ways to prepare food for people in need. Discussion has started to strategize ways to expand a call list or phone tree to encompass the entire town.

The group is also considering ways to mobilize a group to do "mapping" of community resources and needs. In January and February, Cummington Fire and emergency management members trained a group of residents as the first C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team), resulting in a small

initial team of residents with the knowledge and skills to assist others in many types of emergencies.

The West Cummington Congregational Church also does outreach to the congregation and other residents by maintaining a call list that any resident can be included on, arranging for nutrition support through coordinated food access, and counts several members of the COA board among the congregation. The Village Church does outreach to its congregation, many of whom are seniors. The Village Church nurtures community and promotes vitality in the village by providing care, connection, and healing to church members. One COA board member has a connection to the congregation.

Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

Adults age 65 and older are eligible to receive this tax credit when their property taxes and half of their water/sewer bills total more than 10% of their income. Or, if they rent an apartment (without a state or federal subsidy), they may get this tax credit if their rent is more than 25% of their income.

Here are some details:

- Tax filers should use the "Schedule CB form" and "Form 1", respectively.
- It's easy to get the forms. Download Form 1 and Schedule CB Form at the official Department of Revenue site: www.mass.gov/lists/2017-massachusetts-personal-income-tax-forms-and-instructions

If you need help, VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) helps low income and middle income people fill out tax returns for free. Call them at 1-800-906-9887. There are other options including AARP's Tax-Aide program and you can reach them at 1-888-227-7669.

It can be tough to continue taking care of our furry loved ones when illness and death affect our lives. **New 2U Dog Rescue** is a non profit organization in Greenfield run by compassionate volunteers who take in dogs from senior citizens and folks who can no longer care for their beloved pets. Their goal is to place the dogs into a loving foster home environment, evaluate them and match them up with their New2U forever family in the state of Massachusetts.

**Contact Dawn: 413-824-9225,
new2udogrescue@yahoo.com.**

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Domestic Violence Advocate , Hilltown Safety at Home (HS@H)	413 559-8039
If you need help in an emergency, call 911 or the Safe Passage hotline	888 345-5282
Elder Abuse Hotline	800 922-2275
First Call for Help Information and Referral Resources	800 339-7779
Fuel Assistance Application and Recertification	800 370-0940
Hilltown Elder Network – H E N (sponsored by Hilltown CDC)	413 296-4536
Veterans' Service Officer Tom Geryk	413 587-1299
(Westhampton) Joe Henning	413 207-3541
(Plainfield) Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District in Greenfield	413 772-1571
Regional Outreach Coordinator , Peg Whalen	413 404-4566
DO NOT CALL Registry	888 382-1222

Food Services

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Brown Bag Program	800 247-9632 or 413 268-8407
Food Stamps - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	413 552-5400
For assistance call Fran @ Williamsburg COA	413 268-8407
Hilltown Food Pantry - Goshen Town Hall - Diane Meehan, Director	413 268-7578 Wed 1-3; 3 rd Wed 1-6
Meal Site Williamsburg Senior Center	413 268-8407
Meals on Wheels Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES)	413 586-2000 or 800 322-0551
Northampton Survival Center , 265 Prospect St. Northampton	413 586-6564
Salvation Army Emergency Food, Fuel or Medication Vouchers	413 586-5336/6564

Health Services

Highland Valley Elder Services Intake referral for homecare, etc.	413 586-2000
Hilltown Community Health Center - Medical & Dental	413 238-5511, ext. 131
HOPE Nurse , Robin Laferriere, RN	413 238-5511, ext. 313
Janet Dimock , HealthWise Community Health Worker	413 238-5511, ext. 149
Podiatrist Dr. Michael Coby , call Williamsburg Senior Center to schedule (Alternating months at the Senior Center)	413 268-8407
Foot Care Oni, RN , foot care in Goshen, Call Liz Loven for appt.	413 268-7122
Oni, RN , foot care in Williamsburg or in-home visits	413 268-8407
Oni, RN , foot care in Plainfield or in-home visits	413 522-7219
Diane Roeder , foot care in Whamp & Chesterfield	413 374-0457
SHINE, Medicare & Drug Coverage Part D & Prescription Advantage	
Wayne Glaser	Call your COA for appointment
Richard Bauman (Westhampton)	413 527-5240
Lorraine York-Edberg	413 773-5555, ext. 2275
Mass Health and New Health Coverage	
John Bergeron, HCHC-Huntington	413 667-2203
Buliah Mae Thomas at Hilltown Comm. Health Center	413 667-2203

Transportation Services

Cummington Neighbor to Neighbor Drivers	413 634-2262
Westhampton transportation appts or groc. shopping, Louise Jasionkowski	413 527-5134
Williamsburg Medical Rides Williamsburg Senior Center (to schedule)	413 268-8407
PVTA Dial-A-Ride (tickets sold at Williamsburg Senior Center)	866 277-7741
FRTA Van Fran Goebel	413 296-4232

Local Councils on Aging

Chesterfield COA , Janice Gibeau	413 296-4007
Cummington COA , Anne Parsons	413 634-2262
Goshen COA , Evelyn Culver	413 268-3316
Plainfield COA , Deborah Thibault	413 634-0275
Westhampton COA , Julia Lennen	413 537-9880
Williamsburg Senior Center , Marie Westburg	413 268-8407
Worthington COA , Sandra Epperly	413 238-5584

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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 March

Thurs. March 15th at 12:15pm
St. Patrick's Day Songs & Stories with
folksinger and storyteller Tim Van Egmond
Williamsburg Senior Center, 141 Main Rd.
Haydenville, MA

Van Egmond will accompany himself on a wide variety of traditional instruments, including guitar, hammered dulcimer, and limberjack (a wooden puppet that taps out a rhythm dancing on a paddleboard). His captivating talent, warmth, and engaging humor create a moving and enjoyable experience for all.



This program is supported in part by a grant from the Williamsburg Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Fri. March 16th, 9am & 10am
Spa Day at Smith Vocational
80 Locust St. Northampton, MA

Students in the Cosmetology program are offering the following: Shampoo, cut & style \$5.00; Manicure

\$4.00; Pedicure \$8.00; Basic Facial \$8.00. Please call 413-296-4007 to make an appointment. Each appointment takes about an hour and are scheduled for 9 am and 10 am in Room 124 of Building A at the school. Following the Spa Day, enjoy lunch at the Oliver Smith Restaurant!

Sun. March 18th at 2pm
Sidetracked
Chesterfield Comm. Center,
400 Main Rd. Chesterfield, MA



Roots rock, Country and Blues for all ages. Come shake off the winter blues and enjoy this concert that will have you on your feet in no time.

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.

Tues. March 20th at 4:30pm
Prediabetes Informational Meeting
Hilltown Community Center, 9 Russell Rd.
Huntington, MA

Free yearlong class offered to all area residents with prediabetes. Contact Ellie Brasil at 413-667-2203 ext. 322 or ebrasil@hchcweb.org for more information.