

# Cummington Council on Aging

## August 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: August 2018

#### Monday:

|                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Healthy Bones / Balance</b>   | <b>9:30—10:30am</b>   |
| <b>Cummington Coffee Hour</b>    | <b>10:30— 11:30am</b> |
| Town Admin. Assistant            | 9:00 -11:00am         |
| Board of Assessors Assistant     | 9:30 -11:30am         |
| Veterans' Agent (1st & 3rd Mon.) | 9:00 - 11:00am        |
| Bryant Library                   | 6:00 - 9:00pm         |

#### Tuesday:

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Town Admin. Assistant   | 9:00 -11:00am |
| Living Fully, Aging Gracefully<br>and Befriending Death<br>Discussion Group (8/14)<br>in Comm. House Lib. | 1:00 -3:00pm  |
| <b><u>NO Potluck this month</u></b>   |               |
| Board of Health mtg<br>1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays   | 7:00pm        |

#### Wednesday:

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>COA Office Hours</b> | <b>10:00am –5pm</b> |
| Building Inspector      | 10:00 -12:00pm      |
| Compactor               | 5:30 -7:30pm        |
| Bryant Library          | 6:00 - 9:00pm       |

#### Thursday:

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>Healthy Bones / Balance</b>  | <b>9:30 -10:30am</b> |
| <b><u>NO COA Board mtg this month</u></b>                                 |                      |
| Town Clerk  | 4:00 -7:30pm         |
| Building Inspector  | No Thurs. hours      |
| Board of Assessors meeting<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursdays | 6:30pm               |
| Selectboard   | 7:00pm               |

#### Saturday:

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

**COA Board of Directors—  
NO meeting in August.**

#### **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 Lambert (634-2243)  
 Jo Dee Simard (634-5051)  
 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?*

### *August Potluck*

There will not be a potluck in August. We hope you all have a wonderful summer and we'll see you again in September!

#### **August Birthdays**



Philip Perrault, Levi Robbins,  
 Mary Ester Streeter, Jeanette Horton,  
 Lucy Fandel, Ann Lambert, Joel Hinton,  
 David Sprague, Maureen Horak, Dennis Gero, Jim  
 Drawe, Susan Boulanger, Beverly Prentice, Victor  
 Morrill, Mark Lyons, Mark Bevan,  
 Michael Auspurger, Christopher Robertson,  
 Anne Barbour, Lynn Mary Lafountain,  
 Tammy Reed, Marcia Winseck,  
 Susanna Matthews

*May each of you have a wonderful year!*

### **Congratulations to Jan and Jim Martin!**

Jan and Jim were thrown a party at the Deer Hill Rod and Gun Club on July 21st. The gathering was to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. If you missed it, and want to congratulate them, you can send a card to: Jan and Jim Martin, PO Box 45, Cummington MA 01026.

### **Census**

Hot off the press from our Town Clerk Donna Jordan... as of July 9, 2018, Cummington has 840 residents: 118 are children ages 0-16; 418 are adults ages 17-59; and 304 are seniors who are 60 and up.

### **Ladies Lunch Bunch**

On Wednesday, August 8th, we'll gather for lunch at the Worthington Country Club, 113 Ridge Road. The kitchen is under new management and I hear the food is marvelous! As usual, we'll leave from the church parking lot at 11:30.

### **Change in COA Office Hours**

As of July 1st, the COA office is open on Wednesdays from 10:00am to 5:00pm. Our phone number, 634-2262, and email address, coa@cummington-ma.gov, remain the same.

### **Blankets for Kids**

Do your talents include crocheting, knitting or quilting? The Northwestern District Attorney's Office is partnering with Project Linus and TRIAD to provide blankets to children who have been affect-

ed by the opioid epidemic or other trauma. Project Linus is a national non-profit organization that provides homemade blankets to children in need.

For more information, please contact Rachel Senecal at (413) 586-9225 or Rachel.Senecal@Massmail.State.MA.US

### **COME JOIN US!**

Pete and Michele Marcoux are hosting a pot luck.

When: August 18th  
Where: 66 Harlow Road, Cummington

Time: 12:00 Potluck  
1:00 Music by Corey Zink & Country Line: Country Music

BYOB and lawn chair

### **Neighbor Spoofing**

You may ask "What's that?" The Federal Communications Commission is warning consumers about "neighbor spoofing" scams where thieves manipulate caller ID information in ways that make calls appear to have been placed locally. While a call might originate overseas, your caller ID may tell you it's from someone in town! Scammers use such tactics to increase the likelihood that you will pick up the phone trusting it's someone local.

Remember... never give personal information or say "YES" on calls when you don't know the caller. And, registrations on the National Do Not Call Registry DO NO EXPIRE. If you have previously registered your number, there is no need to register again. To file a complaint with the FCC, call 888-225-5322.

### **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

## The Massachusetts Senior Legal Helpline (800) 342-5297

### Are you 60+ and in need of legal help?

The Helpline is a project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Boston. We provide free legal information and referral services to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years old or older. **The Helpline is open Monday through Friday 9AM-12PM.**

### Can I get a free attorney?

Most callers will not be eligible for a free attorney. Helpline advocates can help you find out if you are eligible and complete an application for services with a Massachusetts civil legal services program. Legal services law types include: Social Security/SSI, Veterans Benefits, MassHealth, Medicare, Consumer, Public Benefits, Unemployment, Foreclosures, Utilities, Guardianship, Wills/Advance Directives, Bankruptcy, Housing, Family law, and Nursing Home.

### Can I get referrals to reduced fee and private bar attorneys?

If you are not eligible for a free attorney and have some ability to pay an attorney, we can refer you to reduced fee attorney referral programs where

attorneys will charge you on a sliding scale based on your income.

We can also refer you to private bar attorney referral programs. Private attorneys will charge for their services. Some cases, such as medical malpractice, workmen's compensation, personal injury, and Social Security benefits denials do not require you to pay money upfront in order to get an attorney. The attorney fees are taken from your award only if you win your case.

### Can I get free legal information or referrals?

Yes. Your Helpline advocate will research your legal issue and provide you with information or referrals on most legal topics. We can also text, e-mail, or mail you links or written materials.



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

If so, please email Kristen at [regionalcoanews@gmail.com](mailto:regionalcoanews@gmail.com) to be put on the email list.

## And In Review...

There will not be a test, but I thought it might be a good idea to go back over some stuff about scams. A recent issue of Consumer Reports listed the top 4 kinds of scams that are STILL tripping us up and costing us money.

- **IRS Imposters.** You owe us, pay up or we'll put you in jail.
- **Home Repairs and Security Checks.** Hello home owner, I'm a contractor and noted that you need a new roof. Give me the money, I'll get the supplies, and fix it. OR we are your new security or computer company, and we need to reboot your system.
- **Grandparent Scam.** You grandson is in jail in Mexico, I'm a lawyer, if you send me money I'll get him out. Poor little Timmy – he is so scared there.
- **Lotteries and Sweepstakes.** Congratulations, you won! Just send us money to cover taxes and the expense of sending you your prize.

I lied – here is a test. If I get a phone call from a number or name I don't know, I should:

- a. Just hang up
- b. Not answer in the first place
- c. Try to outwit the caller by keeping him/her on the line and giving false information or trying to find out where they are.

Answer: You chose A and B! YES! Congrats!

Safely,  
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD Committee Member  
413-268-2228, [jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)

# Hilltown Elder Network:

## When a H.E.N. is not a chicken... but is the kind of help you could use!

**Who?** Income eligible seniors aged 62 years or older who reside in Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Westhampton, Huntington and Peru. A participant's eligibility is determined during the intake process. An over-income applicant may use HEN to locate a screened, experienced, local caregiver who will provide services for private payment.

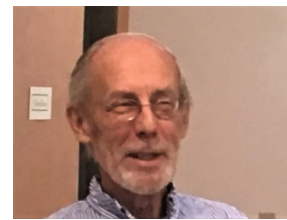
**What?** Home cleaning, laundry, food shopping and meal preparation, snow removal, handling of firewood and escorted transportation for medical appointments or shopping are typical forms of assistance offered. There is no charge. Services provided by HEN caregivers can only be those home chores and daily living tasks that applicants report they are unable to do themselves, due to health conditions and/or mobility limitations. HEN Caregivers are trained local residents who are paid for their services. Each caregiver is reference-screened and CORI-checked. HEN services do not include personal care.

**When?** As an individually customized service, HEN provides continued weekly assistance (typically 1-4 hours per week), short term assistance (i.e. helping an elder who recently suffered

a broken hip and is recovering at home), or one time assistance for an unusual need, such as the clearing of snow following a heavy storm.

**How?** For further information, call the coordinator for your town (listed below) who can provide you with more details about eligibility and available services in your town.

|              |                 |          |
|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| Chesterfield | Helen Pelletier | 238-4418 |
| Cummington   | Sandra Powers   | 634-5558 |
| Goshen       | Fran Goebel     | 268-7411 |
| Plainfield   | Sandra Powers   | 634-5558 |
| Westhampton  | Lilly Baxter    | 527-1532 |
| Williamsburg | Fran Goebel     | 268-7411 |
| Worthington  | Helen Pelletier | 238-4418 |
| Huntington   | Amy Ellinger    | 207-2256 |
| Peru         | Amy Phinney     | 655-0123 |



Charlie Hayes, the administrator of the HEN program, recently received a Certificate of Recognition from Highland Valley Elder Services on the 13th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day for all of his work and support in preventing elder abuse.

### IS YOUR SEPTIC OVERFLOWING? IS YOUR ROOF LEAKING? ARE YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS OLD AND DRAFTY?

If you can't afford to make these repairs, call me about getting a no-payment, no-interest housing rehab loan!

**If you live in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Peru, or Worthington, we have funding available!**

#### Eligible improvements may include:

- Roofs, Windows, Doors, and Foundation Repairs
- Septic Systems, Sewer Tie in's
- Heating Systems, Oil Tank Installations/Removals
- Handicap accessibility work
- Plumbing and Electrical Updates
- New Wells Drilled, Water Filtration, Pump Replacement

#### Program benefits include:

- No Monthly Payments and No Interest
- Loans may be entirely forgiven
- Detailed Work Specifications
- Project oversight by 20+ year construction expert
- Pre-approved contractors

#### Eligible homeowners should:

- Live in a single-family, owner-occupied housing unit
- Be current with property taxes and mortgage payments
- Fall within the income guidelines

#### Household Income Guidelines/ Limits:

| Household Size | Maximum Gross Annual Income |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1              | \$45,200                    |
| 2              | \$51,650                    |
| 3              | \$58,100                    |
| 4              | \$64,550                    |
| 5              | \$69,750                    |
| 6              | \$74,900                    |
| 7              | \$80,050                    |
| 8              | \$85,250                    |

**Call Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 for an application or for more information.**

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.**

*August 7 – Tuesday: **Tour of Fenway Park and Lunch at Cheers.*** Enjoy some free time in Boston. Cost is \$123.

*August 15 – Wednesday: **Guided tour of Kennebunkport*** with time to shop. Lunch at Mike's Clam Shack. Cost is \$109.

*August 19 – Sunday Matinee: **Tanglewood Music Center.*** Leonard Bernstein Memorial Concert, featuring Yo-Yo Ma. Shed seats, lunch on your own. All-inclusive cost is \$84.

*Sept. 7-11: **Washington D.C.,*** 5 days, via bus, \$540 with double occupancy. Full day at the Smithsonian. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

*Sept. 25 – Tuesday: **Big E.*** Circus Spectacular at the Big Top, The Drifters and Platters perform on stage. Cost is \$14, and includes round trip bus, and entrance fee to the exposition.

*October 21 – Sunday: **Halloween in Salem.*** Enjoy the Salem Street festivities and a Tour of House of Seven Gables. Lunch is on your own in downtown Salem. Cost is \$82. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by September 7th.

*December 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 30th.

**Coming soon:**  
MGM Casino, Your suggestion?

## Cheaper Electric? not so fast ...

Have you gotten a call from an alternate electric company promising lower monthly bills if you switch from Eversource to their service? Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, citing aggressive sales tactics, false promises of cheaper electric bills and the targeting of low-income, elderly, and minority residents, issued a report calling for an end to the competitive electricity supply market for individ-

ual residential customers in Massachusetts.

The report found that Massachusetts consumers paid \$176.8 million more than if they had stayed with their utility company during the two-year period from July 2015 to June 2017.

According to the Attorney General, "In Massachusetts, residential customers, like commercial and industrial customers, can 'shop around' for electricity rates. Customers can choose to get their electric supply from their utility – National Grid or Unitil or Eversource – or from a 'competitive supplier.'" ...The AG's report found that the average low-income customer enrolled with a competitive supplier paid \$231 more than if the customer was receiving their electricity from their utility company. The report found some low-income households lost more than \$541 by switching to a competitive supplier."

In the last three years, the AG's Office has received more than 700 complaints about competitive suppliers engaging in aggressive and deceptive tactics. Complaints include suppliers pretending to be a utility company to induce customers to turn over sensitive information; suppliers harassing customers with repeated calls or home visits; and door-to-door salespeople forcing their way into elderly customers' homes and refusing to leave without a signed contract.

If you think you or an older adult you know might be vulnerable to aggressive sales pitches, you can add your name to a "do not switch" list. That way, even if scammers convince you or a loved one to switch, the transaction will not actually take place. To add your name to National Grid's "Do Not Switch List" call: 800-322-3223. For Eversource, call: 1-877-659-6326

## Seniors Aware of Fire Education



It's August; I hope you are enjoying it. It's also Fair season in the hilltowns and beyond. Here are a few safety tips that will help make your fair experience great:

- Keep hydrated -- drink lots of water.
- Wear comfortable, slip resistant shoes.
- Watch out for uneven walking areas.
- Sit for a spell when you begin to feel tired or overheated.
- Dress for comfort and bring something warm to wear in the evening.

Have a good time and SAFE Fair Season!

--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.*

**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

This Newsletter is sponsored in part by a grant from The Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

**Out and About in August**

**Wed. August 22nd, 12:15pm**  
**Patrick Callinan & Friends**  
*Williamsburg Senior Center Cafe*  
*141 Main St. Haydenville, MA*

Lively entertainment by local musicians! Please call two days ahead to reserve lunch for \$3 if interested: 268-8407.

**Thurs. August 30th, 7pm**  
**Lonesome Brothers**  
*Florence Music on the Porch series,*  
*Park St. Florence, MA*

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the music!

**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.

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.

**The Worthington Council on Aging** office is in the process of moving to their new location, **2 Packard Park (Corner's Grocery Building)**. The mailing address is the same (PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098-0007) but the phone number for the office has not yet been determined. Please continue to use coordinator, Sandy Epperly's, home phone if you have any questions: 413-238-5584.

