

# Cummington Council on Aging October 2020 Newsletter



**Cummington Council on Aging  
P.O. Box 95, 33 Main St.  
Cummington, MA 01026**

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413-634-2262  
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*Greetings, everyone!*



We have now passed the 6 month mark of our altered way of living. Social distancing, mask wearing – it has all become rather familiar at this point. I am hoping that you are able to make the best of this difficult situation.

The activities that we used to offer – exercise, coffee hour, luncheons, trips, etc. – are still on hold. We are unable to find a way to offer any activities in a manner that is safe for all of us. I hope that everyone is finding replacements for these activities for now. For those of you who attended exercise class, hopefully you are continuing those exercises at home. Others may be hiking or walking. Or having a socially distanced coffee gathering with a friend in your yard. This has been a time for much creativity and resourcefulness!

**We are still looking** for a few more board members to share the joyful work of planning and implementing various programs, services, and activities for Cummington's older adults. Although we are especially in need of someone who has experience with bookkeeping or accounting, we welcome all backgrounds and experiences. If you are interested, or would like additional information, please contact me at 413-320-0663.

As I have mentioned before, although we are not meeting for in-person activities, the COA is open for you. Please call me (413-320-0663) if we can assist you in any way.

Also, for those of you curious about the ongoing discussion group "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully", which is meeting via Zoom, the next meeting is on **Tuesday, October 13**. Please reach out to me if you have not yet participated and would like to.

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 ★ **Do you need a mask?** ★  
 ★ One of our talented and ★  
 ★ generous board members ★  
 ★ made washable, cloth masks ★  
 ★ for the COA to distribute. ★  
 ★ Who needs one? If you would like one – ★  
 ★ even if you already have one and would like an ★  
 ★ extra – please call the COA office at 634-2262 ★  
 ★ and leave a message with your name and ★  
 ★ phone number. ★  
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### What have we been up to?

With the assistance of other officials in town, the COA has been busy this past month working to obtain various pieces of equipment – both technology and exercise related – that will soon be available for your use. We received some grants which enabled these purchases. More information and details will be coming soon.

### A thank you to the COA board

I want to recognize and thank the COA board for the work and energy that they put into the COA. From the days when we led exercise classes or prepared beautiful luncheons to these days where we "meet" via teleconference and brainstorm ways to serve you, their intelligence, humor, generosity, and kindness are always present. Thank you!

### Mobile Market in Cummington

The last day for the Mobile Market in Cummington is October 8th. The Market sets up in front of the Kingman Tavern (41 Main Street) on Thursdays from 4:30 to 6 p.m. You can pay with cash, credit, debit, SNAP, WIC, or Senior FMNP Coupons.

**For more information, visit:**  
[www.hilltownmobilemarket.info](http://www.hilltownmobilemarket.info)



**Other Resources Available to You**

**Hilltown Food Pantry**

The Goshen Food Pantry is open for curbside pickup on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m. No reservation is needed. It is located at 40 Main St., in the lower level of Goshen's town offices. Home delivery is possible if you are home bound. You may also designate someone to pick up for you.

**Groceries & Prescription pick-up/delivery**

Call 634-5452 or email cummingtoncertcvhelp@gmail.com to arrange for prescription pick-up and delivery as needed, as well as grocery deliveries from the Creamery and Sawyer Farm on Tuesdays and Fridays. Orders must be in by Mondays and Thursdays at 2 p.m.

**Emergency food**

If you find yourself in need of food and cannot wait until your next grocery trip or next pick up from the food pantry, CERT can help you. Please call 634-5452.

**Library curbside pickup**

The Bryant Free Library is open on Saturday mornings from 8:30-12:30 for curbside pickup of books, magazines, and DVDs. Items can be ordered by calling the library and leaving a message at 634-0109.

**Your COA board members are:**

- Elliot Ring, Chairman (634-5666)
- Gail Roberge (512-0660), Worth Noyes (634-8003)
- Kathy Knox (634-8041)
- Ann Eisenhour, Foot Care Coordinator (634-2243)
- Anne Parsons, Recording Secretary (634-5707)



**Happy Birthday in October!**



- Mildred Stevens, Wilma Hatch, Ronald Wolf, Walter Korzec, Carolann Skaling, Judith Suriner, Ronald Woodland, Harriette Laurent, Diane Harris, Jeffrey Matuewezski, Audrey Marcoux, John Earls, Howard Meister, Marguerite Yamilkoski, Stephen Yoshen, Mark Malinak, Patricia Keith, James Messineo, Jane Crosby, Robert Taylor

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Important Contacts:**  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 • **Cummington Emergency Response Team**  
 CummingtonCERTCVHelp@gmail.com or call Sarah Fournier-Scanlon and Lee Fournier-Lewis at 634-5452.  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 • **Non-emergency police matters:** 634-0056  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 • **COA:** 413-320-0663 or coa@cummington-ma.gov  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 • **Do you need a mask?** Call the COA office at 634-2262 and leave a message.  
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***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!*

The Cummington Council on Aging



# Highland Valley ELDER SERVICES

**Assisting Elders, Families & Caregivers  
through collaboration, education  
and advocacy for 45 years.**

**413-586-2000**

**All programs and services still operational  
during the COVID pandemic.**

## **Information & Referral Services**

**Family Caregiver Program– Resources for Caregivers**

**Home Delivered Meals**

**Community Dining Sites**

**Ombudsman Services– For Nursing Facility Advocacy**

**Money Management Assistance**

**Protective Services**

**Case Management**

**Options Counseling**

**Transportation Concierge**

**Homemaking, Personal Care, Companion**

**Personal Emergency Response Systems**

**Consumer Directed Options- Hire family/friends to  
provide the assistance you need.**

**And more...**

**[www.highlandvalley.org](http://www.highlandvalley.org)**

**[info@highlandvalley.org](mailto:info@highlandvalley.org)**



## *Options Counseling provides:*

- Free consultation with a certified Options Counselor.
- Unbiased information.
- One-on-one meeting, either in person, over the phone or by email, to discuss what your short and long term goals are.
- Personalized approach that ensures that your choices are respected.
- Exploration of options for paying for services.
- Referrals related to your particular needs and wishes.
- Assistance with planning the next steps.
- Information about long-term care services and supports.

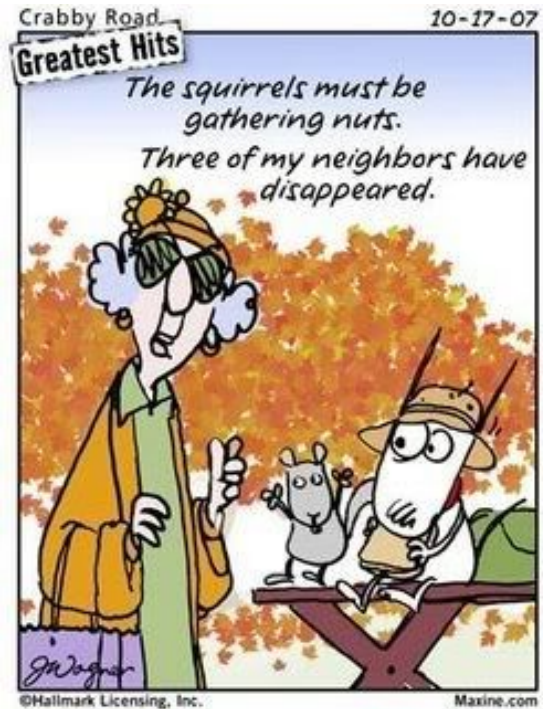
**To connect with an Options Counselor contact Highland Valley Elder Services Information & Referral Department:  
413-586-2000**

**Chesterfield Community Cupboard closes as the Little Corner Cupboard opens in new location on October 1**



Cold weather coming, lack of heat sources and logistical problems with snow plowing have led the Chesterfield Community Support Team, in consultation with the Board of Health, to set up at a smaller site at the entrance to the kitchen at the Chesterfield Community Center. It's been clear that the food that's been offered at the Cupboard has been very appreciated and needed. The need to keep it going will no doubt continue as financial hardships grow, prices of food increase and farm markets begin to close. Even with the Goshen Pantry, CISA coupons and Hilltown Bucks, food insecurity persists.

New protocols have been developed for assuring the health and safety of everyone using the cupboard in the new restricted space. The "Little Corner Cupboard" will be open twice a week on Tuesdays from 9-11am and Thursdays from 2-4pm. Volunteers are required to be on site during the open hours. Strict guidelines for social distancing and sanitizing will continue to be followed and masks are required. The goal of staying as anonymous as possible is still in effect. The duration of the program will be guided by the receipt of business and individual donations.



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

If so, please email Kristen at **regionalcoanews@gmail.com** to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

**Scam Covid-style**

You have to admire scammers, in some ways. They see a new thing in life and adjust their pitches to it, and quickly. For instance, did you know some scammers want you to think you can get a government stimulus check from a car dealership? They may send a check that says "COVID-19 Auto Stimulus" with space to endorse the check on the back, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Another example. I ate inside in one restaurant and they asked me for contact information in case they need to do virus tracing, e.g., tell me there has been a potential contact with a person who tested positive for Covid-19. Well, another wrinkle from the scammers is to call and pretend to be a contact tracer and ask questions that go beyond the names of places and people you have come in contact with. A real tracer will never ask you for money or financial information.

Certainly the savvy citizens of Massachusetts would not suffer from these scary scams! Sadly, from Jan. 1 to Sept. 9 in MA, there were 5,664 fraud reports with a loss of \$2.69 million dollars. And that is just what was reported! There was a very sharp increase in cases starting in mid-March. Funny coincidence, that, timed with the virus. These data are from the FTC Covid-10 and Stimulus Reports: [public.tableau.com/profile/federal.trade.commission#!/vizhome/COVID-19andStimulusReports/Map](https://public.tableau.com/profile/federal.trade.commission#!/vizhome/COVID-19andStimulusReports/Map)

I'm sure you can figure out not to buy a virus testing kit, "early-release" vaccine, or a preventive or cure for Covid-19 from a phone call or email. You won't assume someone who says s/he is calling from the government (Social Security, Centers for Disease Control, etc.) has your best interests in mind. All the old safeguards still hold – don't click on email attachments, don't answer the phone from an unknown source, guard your wallet and identification., don't get pressured into paying, keep some skepticism.

Please Be Safe,  
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member  
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

## Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

For all of us on Medicare, it's annual Open Enrollment again. October through the first week in December...we get to go shopping...for our health care coverage. If you don't want to "shop" for different coverage, you don't have to, but there might be a better deal, that is better coverage for less money. And we all love to bargain hunt. Maybe not so much with health insurance? If I've heard it once, I've heard it dozens of times that folks just wish their coverage was simple. Perhaps in my lifetime, it will be, and we will look back on these days of chaos when health insurance companies bombarded us with their advertising as "back in the dark ages".

But in the meantime, our mailbox (and TV) is full of advertisements for health insurance because this is the season to switch if you want to.

### What is all the advertising about?

When we turn 65, and we've paid into social security, or our spouse has paid into social security, we get Medicare: original Medicare A & B. Then we can sign up for a Medicare D plan to cover our Rx, or enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan that covers Rx. Each year in the fall, during Open Enrollment, we get to change our mind and select different coverage. Many Medicare beneficiaries will decide to change their Rx coverage (their Medicare D plans). This happens a lot because the D plans change their prices, change their deductibles...even change their formularies which is the list of Rx they cover. So what was a "good" plan for you last year may not be a good plan for you next year.



An example that kept us SHINE counselors busy last year was a Humana Walmart's switch. Their \$32 x month D plan that covered a lot of Rx, changed to a \$62 x month plan for the same coverage. If folks read their mail, they were pretty upset. If they knew to call a SHINE counselor, they could "shop" the plans for the upcoming year and discover that Humana had another plan, in the \$30 x month range...which covered almost the same Rx. But you had to know this....and switch.

### How does the switch work?

During Open Enrollment, you get to sign up for a new plan if you want. The new plan takes effect January 1st and cancels out your old plan. To see if you should switch, you might contact your SHINE counselor who can do a Plan search/

analysis for you and give you the contact information you need to call and enroll in a new plan.

You can call your senior center to schedule an appointment with a SHINE counselor. 'tis the season to be shoppers, if we want.

## Household Hazardous Waste Collection

**Saturday, October 24, 2020,  
9 am – Noon**

**at Westhampton Highway Department**

**Create a Safe Home: Properly dispose of household hazardous waste.** The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) announces their annual HHW Collection Event for residents of the ten HRMC member communities of: Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington.

The program is free to HRMC member-town residents, however, reservations and pre-registration is required. Pre-registration runs from October 1-18, 2020. Please email your name, street and mailing address (including town and zip code), and phone number to [hrcm@hrcm-ma.org](mailto:hrcm@hrcm-ma.org). Or you may phone HRMC with the above information including an email address at 413-685-5498. Note that Huntington residents are asked to provide their transfer station sticker number at the time of registration. HRMC will confirm your registration by email and send an attached confirmation letter to bring with you to the event.

Protect your home and our environment by properly disposing of old or unwanted household chemicals. Products containing lead, petroleum products, pesticides, herbicides, and acids should NOT be poured on the ground, down the drain, or placed in household trash.

The HRMC HHW collection program accepts a wide range of unwanted household products with labels that indicate that special handling is required. Examples of common warnings include "caustic, toxic, corrosive, poison, flammable, warning, danger, caution and keep out of reach of children and pets."



Make your home a safer home by changing your purchasing habits, and adopting some minor changes to the way you clean your home or care for lawns and gardens.

For more information on recycling, visit the "What to do With" link at: [www.hrcm-ma.org](http://www.hrcm-ma.org)

## Epidemics

The world today seems to find us more stressed and frightened than COVID-19 can explain. The unrest, divisions and anger seeping into the fabric of our lives leaves us hoping, if not longing, to find a way to understand how we got here and what's in the future. Sarah Prince, our yoga teacher, found a passage from Ayurveda, an ancient system of health maintenance. Today it is often referred to as the sister science of yoga. The main text, Charaka Samhita, written 2,000-2,500 years ago, is primarily a discourse between Atreya (a great Ayurvedic physician) and his disciple Agnivesa. It was first written in Sanskrit in a poetic style, as are all Vedic texts. The rhythm, meter and melody of the Vedas allowed for easier memorization.

### The Root Cause of Epidemic

Agnivesa asks Atreya, "What is the root cause of Vata imbalance, which is the root cause of an epidemic?" This was Atreya's response (remember, these are written in poetic form, over 2,200 years ago):

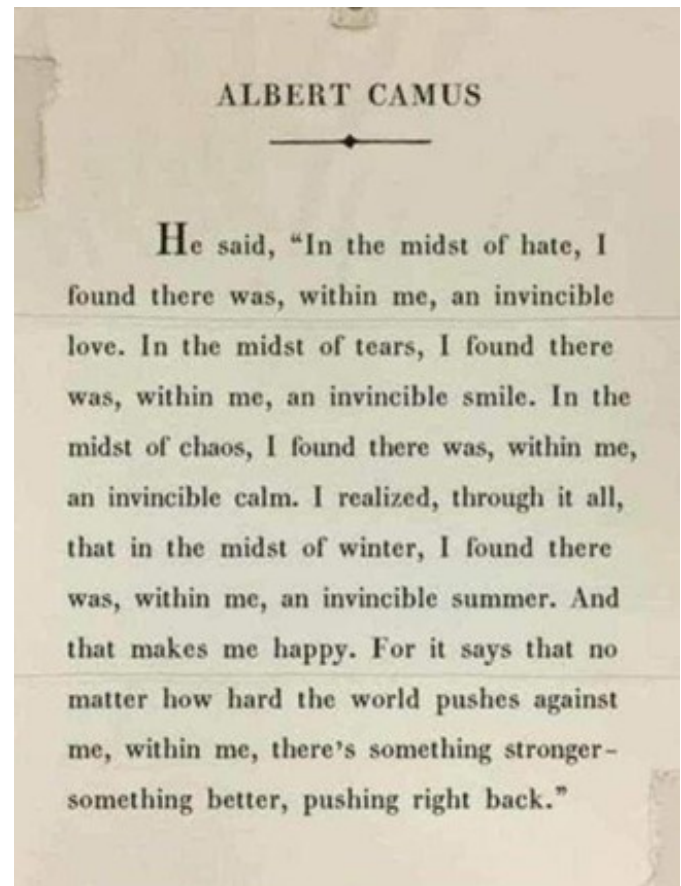
The root cause of derangement of vata and epidemic is unrighteousness. When the Heads of country, city, guild and community have transgressed the virtuous path and deal unrighteously with the people, their officers and subordinates, the people of the city and community, and merchants carry this unrighteousness further.

Thus, the unrighteousness puts pressure on and forces righteousness to disappear. Then the people with righteousness, having disappeared, are abandoned even by the Gods. Consequently, when righteousness has disappeared, unrighteousness has the upper hand and the Gods have deserted the place, the seasons get affected and because of this, it does not rain on time or at all. There is abnormal rainfall, winds do not flow properly, the land is affected, water reservoirs are dried up, and herbs, giving up their natural properties, acquire morbidity or die. Then epidemics break out due to polluted environment and food.

Likewise, unrighteousness is also cause of the destruction of community by weapons. Those who have excessively increased greed, anger, attachment, and conceit, disregarding the weak, attack each other.

*Sharma, PV Charaka Samhita, Vimanasthanum, Ch. 3. Verses 20, 21 Chaukhamba Orientalia. Delhi. 1981*

During this challenging time everyone who looks for truth and the right thing to do and does it will bring balance back to our planet.



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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 183  
Greenfield MA

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## **October is Fall Prevention Month**

### **CATCH YOURSELF! Simple Steps to Prevent Falls**

#### **Your risk of falling increases when you have:**

- fallen before
- balance problems
- chronic diseases
- depression
- hazards in the home
- a lot of medications
- memory problems
- muscle weakness
- problems walking
- vision problems

#### **Reduce your risk of falling and stay independent, healthy and strong by following these steps:**

1. **Get a fall risk assessment.** Talk to your doctor about your fall risk, especially if you have any of the conditions above.
2. **Review your medications.** Bring all your meds and supplements to your doctor or pharmacist at least once a year and when there are changes in your health. Ask about side effects and interactions, especially if you take four or more meds.
3. **Have your vision checked** once a year by an eye doctor.
4. **Engage in regular physical activity.** Ask your doctor about the best activities for you and make a plan. Doing Strength and balance exercises using your lower body can build your strength, improve your balance and coordination, and reduce your risk of falling.
5. **Assess your home and make changes for safety.** Use a home safety checklist or talk with a professional to look for things inside your home that make you more likely to fall. Change your home to make it safer; reduce clutter, improve lighting in rooms, hallways and stairwells; and install handrails and grab bars.

**For more information, visit: [www.stopfalls.org](http://www.stopfalls.org).**