

Cummington Council on Aging

January 2021 Newsletter



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

Chrisoula Roumeliotis
413-634-2262
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Happy New Year!



The COA would like to wish you all a wonderful new year. We hope you had a peaceful holiday season and that the new year brings health and joy.

We are all hoping that 2021 sees an end to the worst of the pandemic, with vaccines becoming available and, hopefully, some return to socializing and gathering. Until it is safe to do so, please hang in there and continue to wear your masks and maintain distance from others not in your household.

Please continue to look after yourselves and your neighbors and do not hesitate to reach out if you or someone you know is in need. The COA is open for you. Call Chrisoula at 413-320-0663 if we can assist you in any way.

Medical Equipment for Borrowing

As many of you know, we have numerous pieces of medical equipment available for your use. Stored in the basement of the Community House, we have the following available: walkers (with two wheels and with four wheels), wheelchairs, shower seats and tub transfer seats, toilet seat risers (with and without handles), and other items. If you need to borrow an item, please call Chrisoula at 413-320-0663. If you have any equipment of this nature (in good, clean condition) that you would like to donate to our collection, call me as well. We will arrange a meeting outside of the Community House (in the side parking lot) to pick up or drop off equipment.



Pedal Exercisers Available!

Thanks to a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services, we have purchased five pedal exercise machines. A pedal exerciser is also called a floor exercise bike or a pedal machine. It is essentially a

portable exercise bike that is placed on the floor and engages your lower body, while you sit in your own chair. Put your feet on the pedals and start pedaling!

If you are a resident of Cummington and are over 60 years old, then you can borrow one of these pedal exercisers. If you would like to borrow one or have any questions, leave a message at the COA office at 413-634-2262 with your name and phone number.

Foot Care Clinic

Piper Sagan is running a foot care clinic at the Hadley Senior Center. Although priority is given to residents of Hadley, it is open to out-of-town seniors if there are available appointments. The fee is \$45. For more information and to make an appointment, call the Hadley Senior Center at 413-586-4023, ext. 6.

Easy Ride Van

The Hilltown Easy Ride van continues to provide trips for shopping to Northampton on Tuesdays and to Pittsfield on Thursdays. Rides to medical appointments are available on Mondays and Wednesdays. Contact Ed Pelletier at 296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully

The next Zoom meeting is **Tuesday, January 12.**

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 homebound. 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.

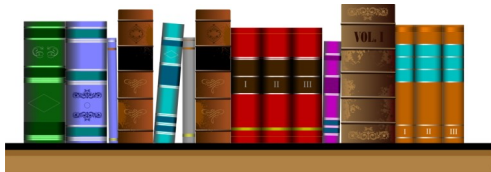
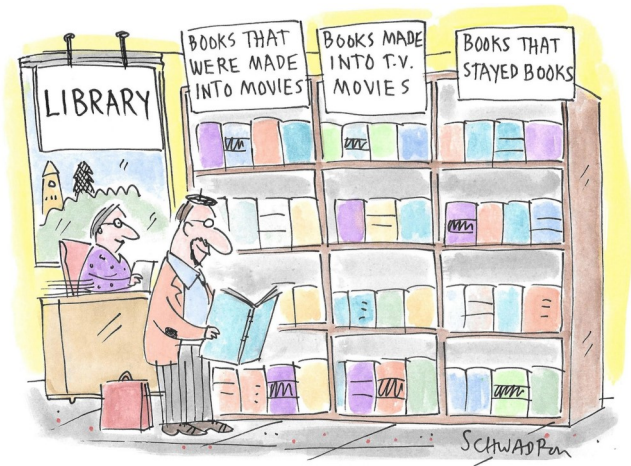
Your COA board members are:
 Elliot Ring, Chairman (634-5666)
 Gail Roberge (512-0660),
 Worth Noyes (634-8003)
 Kathy Knox (634-8041)
 Ann Eisenhour, Foot Care Coordinator (634-2243)
 Anne Parsons, Recording Secretary (634-5707)

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.



Important Contacts:

- **Cummington Emergency Response Team**
CummingtonCERTCVHelp@gmail.com or 634-5452.
- **Non-emergency police matters:** 634-0056
- **COA:** 413-320-0663 or coa@cummington-ma.gov

Happy Birthday in January!



Eva Howes, Gerald Meyers, Edith Morton,
 Monica Vandoloski, Marcia Merkle,
 Geoffrey Kenseth, George Brownfield,
 Donna Forgea, Elliot Ring, Eric Hardendorff,
 Keith Jenkins, Ana Busto, Alma Owen,
 John Walker, Corinne Sharkey,
 Mark Demaranville, Sheila Tower, Leni Fried,
 Cynthia Cutter, Christine Earls, David Bartley,
 Nancy Bean, Peg Cowan, Patricia Wilcox,
 William Miller, Gregory Tonelli, June Lynds,
 Bobby Ann Higgins, Erik Jernstrom

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

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



I am sure that we are hoping that 2021 will be a much better year than 2020. But whatever happens with COVID, January will still be January with its cold, ice and snow; and we Hilltowners will be driving in that stuff. Here are a few things that you can put in your car that will help you if you get stuck in the weather:

- ⇒ A flashlight with extra batteries
- ⇒ A first aid kit and manual
- ⇒ Jumper cables.
- ⇒ Flares
- ⇒ Blanket, hat, mittens, shovel, windshield scraper, sand, tire chains, fluorescent distress flag, caution triangles.

Have a SAFE New Year!

--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.



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!

List Plus Calendar Equals a Plan

So along about this time of year, I often write about things that could be New Year’s resolutions, or not, depending. If you don’t believe in making resolutions, that’s ok, but I have a suggestion for you. Make a list! Associate that list with a calendar, and **ta da!** You have a plan! This a way to make a possibly overwhelming task doable, and so much in life improves with a plan, I do believe.

The plan to which I refer is based on a list which is based on things you really should do to make life easier for yourself and for those who follow behind you. Remember the Big Five? They are the will, health care proxy, durable power of attorney, advance directive, and HIPAA privacy release. No surprise, they will now and again require a review and update. Last year to those five we added the task of keeping up with your credit reports, and I’m going to add three more – writing a Letter of Instruction, compiling relevant information, and preparing a budget.

Why the calendar? If you take these nine items and assign them a calendar month, then you can spend a few minutes a month dealing with them one at a time. You will then have three months to do as you please!

First, pick your lucky number (between 1 and 30, ignoring February’s limitation) if you have one. Then pick one of the nine items and pair it with a month. Write them all down on your list and in each month of a calendar on your lucky number day. It doesn’t matter a whole lot what month you use, but you might want to use March to check your credit reports because this task is free and easy until the end of April. If you haven’t done this, go to www.annualcreditreport.com/reviewYourReport.action. Look at each one now, dispute anything that is wrong, get it fixed, then start the annual cycle of checking.

Contact me if you need a refresher on the Big Five, and Plan Away!

Jean O’Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

This month's good news is about an often forgotten benefit called Health Safety Net.

This program was started back in the 1950s when we were investing in our nation's infrastructure, building interstate highways, schools, hospitals and clinics. As is the case with much federal funding, the money to build our hospitals and clinics came with a mandate, a promise to provide care for patients with limited financial resources. Decades ago, this program was called "Free Care" and helped provide medical treatments/services, usually in the hospital's ER, for those patients without insurance, struggling to pay medical bills. More recently it was called "Uncompensated Care Pool" meaning hospitals and federally funded clinics could bill for patients if they had no insurance and limited income.



These days it's called "Health Safety Net" which is a much better name because this program provides a safety net for those whose insurance isn't covering all their bills.

Example: if you are hospitalized and have Medicare, but no supplemental insurance, you are responsible for paying the hospital deductible of \$1400 and most likely some co-pays for medical treatments received. If you meet the income guidelines, Health Safety Net could cover these costs.

The interesting thing about Health Safety Net is that this benefit eligibility regulation does not count assets. If you are single, your income needs to be below \$1,595/month. If your income is as high as \$3,190/month....you would still qualify for partial Health Safety Net. Married couples income needs to be less than \$2,155 for full benefits, but can be as high as \$4,310 for partial coverage.

Health Safety Net covers any co-pays or deductibles for a hospital stay and any medical services you receive in a federally-funded clinic (like the Hilltown medical centers). Yes, this includes dental care you might receive there.

The good news gets better. If you are having difficulty paying for your Rx because even though you have a Medicare D plan, or insurance through your retirement pension, your co-pays are really high: Health Safety Net pays for your Rx if you use the pharmacy in a federally-funded clinic like Holyoke or Chicopee medical centers. Their pharmacies take "outside scripts", meaning your doctor can call in your Rx to that pharmacy and you can pick it up free, or with a very low co-pay. Health Safety Net will be billed.

Example: over the years, I have had folks with inhalers with big co-pays, some medications for osteoporosis or glaucoma with co-pays of several hundred dollars a month. If they meet the income eligibility guidelines, Health Safety Net will pay for their Rx.

Health Safety Net is not MassHealth. It is a Federal program. But in Massachusetts, you apply for HSN by filing a MassHealth application. For help with that, you can call your senior center and ask for a SHINE counselor.

Where in the Hilltowns can you get help with food?

Winter is on our doorstep, the pandemic is still with us and having choices for safe access to food still is a challenge. Here are some of the options available:

- ⇒ **The Hilltown Food Pantry** in Goshen is open on Wednesdays from 1-3pm and every third Wednesday from 1-6pm. It offers food at no cost for everyone.
- ⇒ **Chesterfield residents** can pick up food at the Community Cupboard on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9-11am. Located at the Community Center, it's available for people who need to avoid traveling to box stores, facing financial difficulties or could benefit from help for related reasons. No registration or release of personal information needed.
- ⇒ **Highland Valley Elder Services Meals on Wheels program:** Call (800) 322-0551 to find out more about their Home Delivered Meals and to learn the latest in adaptations made during COVID-19
- ⇒ **Take and Eat.** Our Lady of the Hills Church and Williamsburg Congregational Church offer residents in the hilltowns a meal program called "take and eat". Volunteers prepare meals each Saturday and deliver those meals to residents who have requested them. Anyone wishing to receive a free meal please contact Nancy Wood at 268-7978.
- ⇒ **Hilltown Food Bucks**, offered through HCDC. Eligible participants can receive between \$100-\$125 food coupons per month for five months to be used at participating local stores and farms. The coupons double your spending power when you make a purchase, so a shopping basket worth \$80 can be paid for with \$40 of coupons and \$40 of your own money. For questions on the Hilltown Food Bucks program, please contact Kate Bavelock, Director of Community Programs, at kateb@hilltowncdc.org or 413-296-4536 x116. Participating Retailers: Corners Grocery Store in Worthington, Chesterfield General Store, Old Creamery Coop in Cummington, Moltenbrey's Market in Huntington, and the Williamsburg Market.
- ⇒ **The Plainfield Mutual Support Network** has

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an account set up at The Old Creamery in Cummington for folks in need. In Worthington, the Sawyer Farm is offering food pickup. First-timers get \$20 off their first order. Contact info needed.

⇒ **Cummington:** Groceries & prescription pick-up/delivery. Call 634-5452 or email cummington-certcvhelp@gmail.com to arrange, 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.

⇒ **Westhampton Winter Food Pantry:** The food pantry at the church is stocked with items. Anyone needing food is welcome to come: Mondays & Wednesdays 5-8pm, Fridays 11am - 2PM, Saturdays 9am-12 Noon. It is located in the church kitchen at the back of the church. When open, the doors will be unlocked. The pantry is anonymous and self-serve. To keep the food bank running, they need volunteers to help open and close the pantry. Those interested in helping can sign up here: www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0544ada82ba5ff2-food

⇒ **The Take and Eat ministry** is a non-denominational effort that serves elders and home-bound people in need, preparing and delivering weekend meals for up to 100 clients in Easthampton, Southampton, and Westhampton, on the first, third, and forth Saturday of the month. St. Philip's Episcopal Church and the Westhampton Congregational Church are working together to provide meals on the 4th weekend of every month. If you have any questions or have a specific need, you can call the church at (413) 527-4204 and someone will get back to you.

Nanette's Nook

Nan Clark, a writer of children's animal stories, has provided a story, in couplets, that brings a lighter side to life as we face a new year. It reminds us of two things: that love is more permanent than one thinks and happy endings to stories still lighten an otherwise dreary day. As Nan writes: "This is a true story about my grandmother and a piglet she raised on their farm in Pennsylvania in the 1800s. Her name is Lida Andre." The pig's name is Ted. Looks like Lida was quite a lady. Nan may soon be providing more of Lida's farm stories. We need stories now more than ever. Do you have one you'd like to share? If so, send it to coa@townofchesterfieldma.com.

Pig in the Parlor: A Pig's Tale with a Twist

By Nan Clark

"A pig in the parlor!? Never!" you say;
But that is where Ted was discovered today.

His Missy was missing- "a 'birthing'", they said,
Which, of course, didn't make any sense to her Ted.

He considered this woman to be his Pig Mother
And didn't desire a sister or brother.

After all, she had raised him since he was a runt;
"She can't do without me", he'd boast with a grunt.

A box by the wood stove she'd fixed for his bed;
Nothing was ever too good for her Ted.

His bottle she'd filled with warm milk from her Bossy;
In no time at all Ted was plump, pink and glossy.

She'd scooped out a grapefruit and filled it with mash;
Young Teddy would slurp up that slop in a flash.

He grew and he grew, getting Bigger and BIGGER;
Til famous he was for his Fabulous Figure!

You'd think he was merely a mite of a mouse,
The way that he wandered all over the house.

Today it was different, there could be no doubt;
Ted couldn't push open the door with his snout.

Looked out his kitchen- it couldn't be true!
Just what would you do if it happened to you?

Ted shoved and he grunted and made such a fuss-
That the hired man chased him and told him to hush.

So he settled quite quietly down by the door;
It seemed that he waited forever — or more.

In his pig-perfect mind Ted was wishin' and hopin'
Someone would forget him and leave the door open.

And that's how he wangled his way to the kitchen;
With a rush, and a grunt, and his curly tail twitchin'.

He knew with a sniff there was no one around,
So he searched through the house without making a sound.

He hid when he harkened an old neighbor lady-
A'fussin' and cooin' 'bout someone's new baby.

"You best be a'namin' the darlin'", she said;
And she went to the kitchen, but didn't see Ted.

He waited until he was sure she was gone —
He had to find Missy, he'd lingered too long.

Teddy peeked in the parlor and felt all undone,
On the day-bed his Missy was snugglin' her son.

But seein' her pet pig, she cried out with joy,
"Come closer, my Teddy, you're still my Big Boy!"

"Oh Teddy, you will never know how I missed you;
And now that you're here I am just gonna kiss you!"

Well, Teddy's pig-heart was 'bout burstin' with bliss,
And he squealed his excitement, expectin' her kiss.

Just then the old neighbor returned to the parlor-
Saw Ted by the day-bed and how she did holler!

She tossed her starched apron up over her head;
She shivered and shook and she finally said-

"In all me born days as a birthin' mid-wife
I never did see such a thing in my life!"

A Pig in the Parlor! - You callin' him Teddy-
Me thought you be naming' your baby already."

She snatched up her shawl and homeward she hurried;
Missy laughed and told Teddy he needn't be worried.

She showed him her baby, all pinkish and pouty,
Ted touched his wee toes with the tip of his snouty.

The baby, so small, didn't show any fear-
And he curled a fat fist around Teddy's tough ear.

So Missy and the baby and Teddy were glad;
It was surely the best day that they ever had.

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



WANTED: Internet Technician

to coach, consult and problem solve transitions to using computers and life on the internet. Flexible hours, access to work space and resources needed. Looking for someone with experience, good interpersonal skills, patience and pride in seeing people succeed.

Do you know anyone who might be interested in this part-time role?

If so, please contact Jan Gibeau,
Director of Chesterfield Council on Aging:

413-296-4007 or

coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

