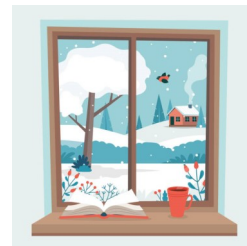


# Cummington Council on Aging

## January 2022 Newsletter



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

**Chrisoula Roumeliotis**  
413-634-2262  
croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov

**Happy New Year!** The COA and its Board of Directors would like to wish you a healthy and joyous new year. Remember that the COA is open for you! Contact us if you would like to participate in any of our activities and programs or if we can assist you in any way. We are always looking for new ideas and volunteers!



And, don't forget to read the regional section of the newsletter - pages 3 through 6 – which contains information about resources and activities that are available to you from the other towns in the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of Councils on Aging ([northernhilltownscoas.org](http://northernhilltownscoas.org)).

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### **Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources**

*For more information on any of these programs, activities and resources, contact the COA at [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) or 634-2262.*

#### **Healthy Bones and Balance**

Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

#### **Coffee Hour**

Mondays and Thursdays from 10:45 to 11:45 a.m.

#### **Needlework Group**

Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m.

#### **Boxed Lunches**

Third Tuesday of each month. (See details below.)

#### **Living Fully, Aging Gracefully**

The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tuesday, January 11th**. For more information, please contact Wynne or Lucy at 634-5576 or [wynlucy@gmail.com](mailto:wynlucy@gmail.com); or Annie at [annieb@crocker.com](mailto:annieb@crocker.com).

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### **Medical Equipment**

Walkers, crutches, shower seats and tub transfer seats, toilet seat risers, and more are available for your use. We also accept donations of equipment.

### **Exercise Equipment**

Pedal exercisers and sets of hand weights (1, 3 and 5 pounds) are available for you to borrow.

### **Chromebooks**

We have a few available for you to borrow.

### **2021 Elder Law Education Guide**

This guide covers a wide range of legal issues affecting the lives of older adults. We have it in pdf format, as well as in paper copy.

### **Yarn**

We still have some yarn available to give you! If you need some for your knitting, crocheting, or any other yarn-based projects, please be in touch.

### **Easy Ride Van**

The Hilltown Easy Ride van provides 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.

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### **Sign up for Monthly meals prepared by HVES: always the third Tuesday of the month**

We are so excited that our third monthly meal from Highland Valley Elder Services is approaching. We encountered a small problem in December where the menu changed after the newsletter was complete. Going forward, we ask that you simply inform us that you are interested in a meal. Then, when we contact you to confirm, we will give you the menu options and you will make your choice at that time. As we try out different methods of sharing the meal details, we welcome your feedback and suggestions.

The next meal will be distributed on **Tuesday, January 18th from noon to 12:30 at the Community House**. You must wear a mask. While we do have bags for packing up your meal, feel free to bring one from home. If you are interested,

leave your name and phone number with the COA at 634-2262 or [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) by **January 9th**. We will be in touch shortly thereafter with the menu options. There is a suggested donation of \$3 per meal.

Would you like to receive a meal every month? If so, let us know. Then, you won't need to contact us each month to reserve your meal. We will still contact you to confirm and notify you of the menu options.

### Puzzles and games

We would like to collect puzzles and games to make available for borrowing. If you have any to donate, contact the COA at 634-2262 or [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) to arrange a drop off. The puzzles (preferably 500 pieces or less) and games must be in good condition and must contain all pieces (including any necessary instruction manuals).



### Art class with Jeanne Johns

There is room for one or two additional participants in the art class. If you are interested, contact the COA at 634-2262 or [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov). The class runs on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 at the Community House. You pay for the instruction only, which is \$10 for each weekly two-hour class.

### Foot clinic

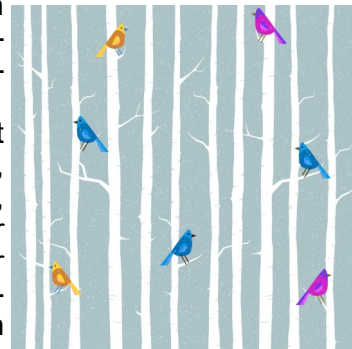
We continue to look into the possibility of resuming the foot clinic. We have recently learned of another well-recommended practitioner who charges \$40 per session. In order to re-start the clinic, we would need to fill 6 appointment slots. If you are interested or have any questions, contact the COA at [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) or 634-2262.

In the meantime, residents of Cummington can

make use of the foot clinic at the Williamsburg Senior Center. A podiatrist is available on the 2nd Tuesday of every odd month and a foot nurse is available on the 2nd Tuesday of every even month. To arrange an appointment in Williamsburg, call 413-268-8407.

### Contact information

In order to keep you up-to-date on programs and activities, and to inform you of urgent and time sensitive matters, it would be helpful to have email addresses for you. If you are interested in sharing your email address with the COA, please forward it to [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov). If you do not have an email address, perhaps a relative, friend or neighbor would like to be your contact for these purposes; have them reach out to the COA.



### Happy Birthday in January!



Gerald Meyers, Edith Morton, 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 Cowen, Patricia Wilcox, William Miller, Gregory Tonelli, June Lynds, Bobby Ann Higgins, Erk 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

Well, it is January and it is getting colder and staying warm may be difficult for many of us who live in older houses. You may be tempted to buy and use a space heater.



Here are few ways to use one as safely as possible:

- ⇒ When buying one, look for a heater that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, like "UL" (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- ⇒ Keep the heater 3 feet away from drapes, furniture or other flammable materials.
- ⇒ Put the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- ⇒ Avoid using extension cords. If you must use one, make sure it is heavy duty and marked with a power rating that is at least as high as that on the heater's label.
- ⇒ Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- ⇒ Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in a bathroom.
- ⇒ Don't even think about using unvented kerosene heaters; they are illegal here.

Have a warm and SAFE winter!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator  
Williamsburg & Cumington 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!

**Winter Games?**

OK, maybe this is weird, but a possible indoor activity for you is to take some financial literacy quizzes with your family, especially the younger members. Surveys show (you know the "They Say" deal) that we are very poor in some basic financial knowledge.

So what, you ask? Well, knowledge is power. Having good financial knowledge can help a person avoid bad debt and defaults on loans. On a positive note, it can help build an emergency savings fund, earn higher interest on investments, and plan to meet financial goals. Overall, that knowledge can help get and keep enough money to be able to do what a person wants to do.

A major investment firm asked more than 2000 people questions in eight different retirement categories. The average grade that people got right was only 30 percent. No one got all the questions right and the highest overall grade was 79 percent. Here is that quiz – give it a try!

**[www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/](http://www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/)**

There are many financial literacy quizzes online; this one is from the AARP:

**[www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1](http://www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1)**

This is a well-rounded set of questions that I recommend. From there, you could search for many other quizzes to take, starting with this page: **[www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy](http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy)**

Enjoy your winter!

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

## Dealing with Dementia: How to cope

by Jan Gibeau

Living with dementia often means having to cope with the stigma attached to the word itself. Just as we are reluctant to talk about the changes happening in our lives, our friends and family struggle to find the right words to use when talking with you. There is no right or wrong way, of course. Many of the questions and fears that arise are hard to discuss when friends and family members are also trying hard to be comforting and reassuring at the same time. Even though the changes you and they have been noticing have probably been there for a while now, being formally diagnosed with dementia can feel sudden and forbidding. This is time to "think in slices, not loaves". It's important to keep in mind that people living with dementia can still continue to live a full life for years following their diagnosis. Even in the face of this fact, many misconceptions about dementia make life harder for everyone. When you forget something, lose something, can't find a word you're trying to use, you wonder, "Are all these events getting tossed into a new box labelled 'person with dementia'? Am I being seen as 'less than' by friends and family?" Then you realize that you, too, may have already bought into the stigma and it's time to kick it away. It may take more than a few kicks.

One of the most powerful ways to debunk the stigma is to ask and listen to others who are themselves living through the same thing. Listening and talking helps you and your friends as well as your family learn what kinds of things people have experienced and what they have found helpful. It also helps to know that you are not in this alone. Here are a few examples of what experiences people have shared; addressing both what can be painful and what can help:

- When I tell someone I have dementia and I have trouble remembering, people say 'Oh I have trouble remembering too'. It makes me feel like they are being competitive or just not listening. I would like to say, 'You have memory problems? Call me when you forget something 15 times. Losing your keys is nothing compared to losing your house'.
- I often feel people aren't really listening, but are making assumptions. I want people to know that there are times when I can't get through a single task because I can't keep the thought of what I was doing in my mind. When people don't listen, it's upsetting. Ask me a question about what's it like, don't compare your experience to mine.
- People are uncomfortable with the level of difficulty I am having. Perhaps this is why they emphasize that I look normal and talk well.
- I'm often told, 'You don't look like you have dementia'. No one says, 'You don't look like you have diabetes'.
- Many folks seem to think if someone has de-

mentia, the person's gone.

- When you have dementia, you are just a person who has something to deal with like any other disease. You wouldn't leave someone behind if they have COPD and needed some extra time to walk.
- With dementia, I need people to give me extra time to respond. Even though others are trying to be reassuring, they may not realize that their comments leave you feeling hurt and upset.

What are some ideas that people thought would be more helpful?

- It helps to not start a sentence by saying "don't you remember?"
- It helps when someone asks, "If you get stuck, would you rather I helped you or waited?"
- It helps if family and friends and others understand my condition.
- When people understand that I can't get a word, I will describe what word I am looking for. It becomes a group effort and can be fun. I feel we are working together.
- When I give people permission to tell me if something seems out of the ordinary with me.
- When I say, "Stop me if you've heard this". It makes the other person feel comfortable.
- People want to get me organized. It works better if I do the organizing. This helps me to remember where things are and generally makes more sense than another person's idea of organization.
- It helps when my friends and family point out my strengths and achievements, not just instances of forgetting or losing something.

It helps when you and others close to you recognize that you are still you, and the goal is to preserve that as long as possible. It's also important that you think about what you would like and let people know. It's important to make a customized plan that's suited to your personal wishes.

There is so much information online dealing with dementia and they all have value, but it can be hard to find a clear and succinct list of facts, issues and good tips in making a plan. I have found that one of the best resources to begin with is the Memory Handbook created by the Alzheimer's Society in the UK. You can explore more by going to their website ([Alzheimers.org.UK](http://Alzheimers.org.UK)) It is written in a way that "get's to the point" in a down to earth way. Worth reading! The Alzheimer's Association website provides access to detailed, in depth articles that address most of the concerns or questions that come up.

Other sources of good information include:

⇒ **Mass Councils on Aging Association;**  
[Mcoonline.com](http://Mcoonline.com)

⇒ **MA Healthy Aging Collaborative;**  
mahealthyagingcollaborative.org, 413-499-0524

⇒ **Executive Office of Elder Affairs;**  
EOEA@ mass.gov, 617-727-7750

⇒ **AARP** www.aarp.org, 866-448-3621

**The Alzheimer's Association;** www.alz.org

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### 3G Service to End in 2022

Major cellular providers plan to phase out 3G coverage beginning in early 2022. What this means is that if you use older devices that rely on 3G networks, the use of your devices will be impacted. This includes cell phones, tablets, emergency/life alert and other medical devices, home security systems, among other technologies. Many providers are reaching out to customers who will be affected by this change; if you are trying to determine if your device uses this older technology, contact the provider or carrier for the service.

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### Reminder:

**SNAP recipients can save an extra \$40-\$80 on their EBT card for fresh fruits and vegetables at eligible locations.**



This is supported by the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), a Massachusetts state program where SNAP recipients get at least \$40 of extra SNAP money every month to spend on local fruits and vegetables. That means if you have SNAP, you automatically have HIP! Two of the farms are: Crabapple Farm, 100 Bryant St. in Chesterfield, and Crimson and Clover, 215 Spring St. in Florence. Shop at these farm locations with your SNAP/EBT card, and get at least \$40 extra to spend through the HIP program. Note: you must have at least \$1 on your SNAP/EBT card when you go and shop; in other words, you need to have a balance on your EBT card in order to earn the HIP incentive.

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### Start the New Year with Smooth Moves

Winter is here! COVID won't go away. Finding yourself feeling a little "stiff" from staying inside so much? Have you been away from exercise and find yourself yearning to get your body moving again? Worried about exercise classes that



are more vigorous than you're ready for? If you answered yes to any of these questions, we invite you to join our new class series called **Smooth Moves**. It's a good class for relaxing, stretching out and feeling good. The program will provide you the opportunity to remain seated in a chair while inviting your body to join you in some basic

movements. Joan Griswold, a very knowledgeable instructor, has created this program to gently guide you through movement oriented to increasing your range of movement and flexibility without pain and discomfort. No special equipment necessary.

This class will be offered on Friday mornings at 9:15am at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Would you be interested in participating in person or prefer a virtual offering? All in person programs require participants to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. For more information, contact Joan Griswold at (413) 268-7985 or joan@bybhealth.com

### On the Road Again...



#### 2022 Trip Lineup

These are some of the bus trip destinations in different stages of planning with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Contact Francine Frenier by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.

⇒ *Day Trip Jan. 27. Ice Castles* is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using thousands of icicles hand-placed by professional ice artists. The castles include breathtaking LED-lit sculptures, frozen thrones, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and much more. Warm clothing and good footwear recommended. We make a stop for a bite to eat along the way. Cost is \$119, \$10 discount if paid early. **Payment due NOW.**

#### Taking interest lists now on the following:

*Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip.* 7 days. Cost \$739, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available.

*Day Trip May 5. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip,* lunch at The Marina. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$112, \$10 discount if paid early.

*Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band* at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$120, \$10 discount if paid early.

*Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound Theater presents David.* 5 days. \$549, \$25 discount if paid by February 16, 2022. Flyer available.

*Day Trip June 9. Corvettes Doo Wop Revue. Lobster Tail or Prime Rib for lunch. Self Drive to the Log Cabin.* Cost to be determined.

**Cummington Council on Aging**  
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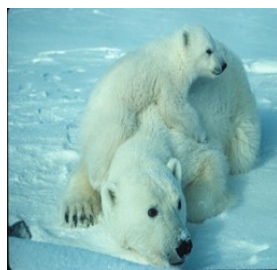
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Kristen Estelle,  
Newsletter Designer

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

**Life in the Artic National Wildlife Refuge**  
**By Fran Ryan**

**Sunday, January 23rd at 2pm**  
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.



On January 23 at 2pm, Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting in person at the Chesterfield Community Center. Fran will discuss some of the wildlife that inhabit ANWR, how they adapt to their surroundings and the importance of the ANWR.

*\*Given that it's cold both here and in the Artic,  
Hot Chocolate will be provided!*

**Peg Whalen presents:**  
**iPhone Basics Workshop**

**Monday January 31st**  
**2:30 to 5:00pm**  
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.

There is still a strong interest by people wanting to learn about their iPhones. Peg will be conducting another workshop that will cover the following issues:

- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Feel comfortable enough with your phone to try apps and features.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Ways to learn more about your phone on your own.

**Interested in coming?**

Please reserve a spot by January 21<sup>st</sup>. Call Peg Whalen, workshop presenter, at 413-404-4566. Leave a voicemail or text with your name, email address, cell phone version (e.g. iPhone 7, iPhone SE, iPhone 12) and your home or cell phone number.