

Cummington Council on Aging

December 2022 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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Chair & Mat Yoga/Heart, Spine & Mind – 2 levels offered for all ages

Try yoga for the first time or advance your beginner/intermediate practice with new inspiration with Yoga Therapist and Personal Trainer Judy Messer.

Level I class: Wednesdays
9:30-10:45a.m. - your choice
of chair or mat work



Level II class: Mondays 6-7:15 p.m. -- will include chair, floor and standing work.

There is room for more participants in these classes, which are held at the Community House. Classes are offered in 3-class sessions for \$33 per session. Registration is required and is ongoing. **Contact Judy at 413-221-3012 or heartcoloration@gmail.com.**

Resource Cart – full of useful supplies!

Next time you are in the Community House, take a peek at the cart located to the left of the COA office. (For those who don't know, the COA office is located in the back of the building, across from the kitchen.) We will be filling the resource cart with various helpful supplies. When an item runs out, it will be refilled, so check back! Anytime the building is open, you can come by to take what you need from this cart. Currently, you will find:

- masks (both KN95 and N95)
- Covid test kits
- personal health care journals
- file of life forms
- greeting cards for various occasions
- the current Elder Law education guide
- Hilltown fall tourism brochures
- walking maps for Cummington and neighboring towns
- games & puzzles
- and more!



After exercising, the Healthy Bones & Balance class enjoyed a delicious lunch and celebrated Halloween in costume.

Game days

Checkers? Yahtzee? Battleship? These games, and others, will be part of a new activity that we are offering to help us all get through the long winter days. Starting in January and going through April, we will have a games day on **the second Tuesday of each month**. Come gather with us and enjoy a hot beverage while playing a board/card game with a friend or neighbor. **The first one will be on Tuesday, January 10th from 1-3 p.m.** This is the same day as the grab & go meal (see more information on that below), so grab your meal, stay to eat it and play a game! Or, just come for the games!

Save the date – January 18th

**On Wednesday, January 18, 2023,
we will be having another potluck!**



The COA will be serving several soups, along with bread/rolls. Look for more details in the January newsletter.

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Community Art Gatherings

Every Wednesday from 11-3, a group of folks gather at the Village Church on Main Street to practice and enjoy their art. Any medium is welcome! Please bring lunch and use the back door to enter the building. Cost is \$4-8 per participant, depending on attendance. For questions, contact Barbara at 634-2209.

Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources

For more information on any of these programs, activities and resources, contact the COA at croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov or 634-2262.

Grab and Go Hot Meal

The next meals will be distributed on **Tuesday, December 13 and Tuesday, December 27**. Pick up your meal between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. If you are interested in either or both meals, leave your name and phone number with the COA at 634-2262 or croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov by **December 6th**. There is a suggested donation of \$3 per meal, which goes to Highland Valley Elder Services.

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— Wednesdays, 1-4pm.

Foot Clinic

Tuesday, January 3, 2023 with Piper 'Sagan at the Community House, \$50 per session. Contact the COA to make an appointment.

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully

The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tues-**

day, December 13th. For more information on this program, contact directly Wynne or Lucy at 634-5576 or wynlucy@gmail.com; or Annie at annieb@crocker.com.

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 clean equipment in good condition.

Exercise Equipment

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

Easy Ride Van

The Hilltown Easy Ride van provides trips for shopping to Northampton on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and to Pittsfield once a month. Medical and other rides can be scheduled for Mondays, Tuesday afternoons, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30 to 4:30. The Driver Pool program is available for medical rides when the van is not available. Contact Ed Pelletier at 296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

Happy Birthday in December!

Peter Lang, Lawrence Slezak, Steven Emerson, Michele Marcoux, Martin Dempsey, Jill Abrahamsen, Nancy Gokey, Peter Tessier, Bona Kidston, Marc Hoechstetter, Louise Dynok, Madelaine Zadik, Brenda Arbib, Mary Perry, JoDee Simard, Daniel Dashnaw, Holly Anderson, John Goehring, Loredana Holmes, Theodore Lynds, Kevin Boissonnault, Ann-Marie Baronas, Paul Gariepy, Lorin Delisle, Antoni Sakowicz, Dale Griffith, Doris Frazier, Robert Ely



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

Do you like the exercise classes? Joan Griswold checks it out:

Joan surveyed members of her exercise classes exploring their views on a range of issues but also on where people stood regarding coming to classes on-site, using Zoom or both. Here are a few take aways

To Zoom or not to Zoom?

74% of those responding to the survey are fine with Zoom offerings. At present, in person classes are held on Friday in Chesterfield. The Smooth Moves class is at 9am and is very well attended by a regular group. It is wonderful to have this time, in person, with folks. At 10:15am, Joan offers the Super Strength workout in person and a small group attend this while others use Zoom. 12% report not being a fan of virtual workouts and prefer in person offerings. 27% of these folks indicate they will return to classes when they are offered in person.

What do people like about the programs?

87% share that they feel a good variety is offered in these class offerings while 12% either had no opinion or disagree. 38% report their favorite part of class is the strength workout, 26% express the core work, 23% the stretching and flexibility and nearly 12 % express the cardio. 87% report feeling these classes positively impact their personal strength, mobility and daily function while nearly 12% neither agreed nor disagreed with this personal impact. 90% report preferring the current class time.

Final Note:

More people are welcome! Join up with friends.
Contact Joan for more info: joan@bybhealth.com

**I hate it when people
ask me if I'm ready for
Christmas. No Susan.
I'm not even ready for
today.**

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!

Top Ten for the Twenties

At year's end, we often see review lists, e.g., top 10 movies, most acrimonious lawsuits, and other topics of huge interest. I thought I'd join in and look back at my 8 (eight!) years of Triad notes and find my personal Top Ten suggestions to close out the year and move forward. Here we go!

- * **Check your credit report.** So many reasons, so easy to do. Then freeze the sucker.
- * **Just hang up.** Do not think you can outsmart a telephone scammer who scams for a living!
- * **If you are not sure who is calling** and you answer anyway, do not say "Yes" or make an "uh huh" noise, don't say "Right!" or "Sure!"
- * **If it sounds too good to be true, it likely is.** Bet your folks told you that.
- * **Get serious about the Big Five.** Give yourself a silver star if you can name these, a gold star if you have done them.
- * **Get serious about setting good passwords.**
- * **Keep your Medicare and Social Security cards in a safe place,** not your wallet. You can carry a copy with the last numbers blacked out.
- * **Do the right thing for your brain.** Eat right, exercise, sleep well, control stress, socialize, and keep thinking.
- * **Don't believe everything you read;** consider the source. By the way, there are only 9 items here...

Hee hee hee,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228

December's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

As the days get colder, we will be turning our attention to ways we can reduce our fossil fuel consumption and ways to get help paying for "green" solutions to our soaring utility bills.

For the immediate future, this is to let you know that all our senior centers have the paper application for fuel assistance from Community Action of Pioneer Valley. This is the agency that covers fuel assistance and other "energy efficient" programs for our towns. Calling them on the phone to request fuel assistance could be a challenge, especially for those applying for the first time. If you have received fuel assistance in past years, you will already have been contacted (that started October 1st) but first time applications must wait until November 1st to start the process. As you might guess, right about now, their phone lines are jammed. Last year they took almost 3,000 first time applications and I'm guessing that number might be even more this year. If you are single, and your income is less than \$41,000/ year, you could be eligible. Know that it takes 6-8 weeks to process your application.

Last year Community Action paid out over 14 million in fuel assistance, helping over 14,000 households. Fingers crossed that there will be more Federal money in the pipeline this year. Community Action has other programs you might utilize once you become eligible for fuel assistance. There's an Older Adult Home Modification program to help with hand rails, ramps, grab bars, and a Heat System Repair and Replacement program for aged furnaces that need upgrading or replacement. This program will

also be doing some projects to install heat pump/mini-split systems and solar panels, a weatherization program which helps with insulation, windows, and removal of old knob and tube electrical wiring. All these programs start with a fuel assistance application. So if you haven't applied before, perhaps this year you should? Check it out at your Senior Center.

More help with Fuel Assistance

In addition to the fuel assistance offered by Community Action Corp in Greenfield, the Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible for state or federal energy assistance. Income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state's median income levels. There is also a fund for equipment repairs should you find yourself in an emergency with failed heating equipment.

Check out: magoodneighbor.org/assistance.html
Income eligibility guidelines for 2022-2023 are as follows based on number in household:

1	\$42,412 - \$56,548
2	\$55,462 - \$73,948
3	\$68,512 - \$91,348
4	\$81,562 - \$108,748
5	\$94,611 - \$126,146
6	\$107,661 - \$143,546
7	\$110,108 - \$146,809
8	\$112,555 - \$150,072

Contact Greenfield Corps: 72 Chapman Street, Greenfield, MA 01301. Phone: (413) 773-3154.

Thank You!



Just a quick note here to thank those of you who have been sending in donations for future funding of the newsletter. We appreciate your support! And this being the season of giving, we hope that we might hear from even more of you as we continue our effort to keep your Newsletter coming to you. Please consider a gift as we approach the end of our tax year. **And THANKS for your support!**



The Regional COA Newsletter benefits from your support!

I would like to contribute to the COA Newsletter. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

(Please make out your check to "Northern Hilltown Consortium/ Town of Chesterfield" and mail to: Chesterfield COA, PO Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Thank you for helping support this vital resource for our seniors!

On the Road Again...



Coming up in 2023

Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291 or fracine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

Multi Day April 23-29, 2023. Myrtle Beach Show Trip. Five shows—Legends in Concert, Carolina Opry Show, The Man of a Thousand Voices, Anthems of Rock and an evening show at the Alabama Theater. There will be a stop at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, NC. Includes bus transportation, driver gratuities, all hotels and most meals for \$829. Get a \$25 discount if paid in full by **January 30, 2023**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

Day Trip May 18. Beatles Show- Ticket to Ride - A 4- piece band that plays high quality, exacting renditions of songs written by the Beatles spanning their entire decade together. Self-Drive to the Log Cabin. Luncheon will include whole steamed LOBSTER, & chicken & ribs. Make payment to FNSC for \$TBD by **February 1st**, so we can get good seats. Mail to the address above.

Day Trip May 22. Staying Alive- A Tribute to The Bee Gees. Five-course luncheon included at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Make payment to FNSC for \$120 due by **February 1st**, so we can get good seats. Mail to the address above.

Day Trip May 31. Oh What A Night! And Resorts World Casino- An exciting musical revue show from Las Vegas features hits from Franki Valli & The Four Seasons. Luncheon buffet and \$25 bonus slot play at the Casino in the Catskills, NY included. Make payment to FNSC for \$135 due by **February 21st**. Mail to the address above.

Multi Day September 29 through October 9, 2023. Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse - S. Dakota & Devils Tower - Wyoming. 11 days. Stops at Corn Palace, Wall Drug, National Museum of Great Lakes, Iowa Museum of Natural History, Des Moines Art Center, and Eck Visitors Center at Univ. of Notre Dame. Cost \$1,178, \$25 discount if paid in full by **June 22, 2023**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

Multi Day October 2-October 6, 2023. Branson, Missouri- 5 days. Fly from Hartford. Seven shows: Irish Dublin Tenors, The Duttons, CJ Newsom, Pierce Arrow Show, Doug Gabriel and others. Visit the Titanic Museum and enjoy a guided scenic Ozark tour. Cost \$2,599 per person double occupancy. Includes air fare, hotels, 4 breakfasts, 4 dinners, deluxe motor coach while on tour, sightseeing, admission to shows and tour escort. \$500 Deposit by **March 15, 2023**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

Workshops for Working the Digital World

Peg Whalen continues to offer free workshops on how to use iPhones, Androids, computers, tablets, internet etc. through December. If you would like to sign up, **contact Peg at 413-296-0314 or pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com**

Fall 2022 Computer Class Schedule

How to use Telehealth and Zoom
Saturday, December 3, 10-11:30am



Android basics workshop
Monday, December 12, 2-4pm

Computer class participants may bring their own Windows 10/11 laptop to learn on or use one of the four COA computers. All sessions held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, Chesterfield, MA 01012.

Technology Tip Announcement

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs has funding to meet the technology support needs of hilltown older adults. Each town's COA is hosting two hours of technical assistance with technology questions, starting in December. Peg Whalen will be available in your town during one of the weeks in each month. Contact your COA for date, time and location scheduled for December. Beginning in January, watch your monthly newsletter for dates and how to schedule a time slot to get help with your technology questions. Call your COA and get the help you need.

The Goshen COA is excited to announce that Peg Whalen will be offering a five session discussion group based on the book by Atul Gawande named *Being Mortal*. Through riveting, honest, and humane stories this book shows that the ultimate goal is not a good death but a good life- all the way to the very end. It is about maintaining dignity, independence, and quality of life as we age. This group will be held on five consecutive Thursday afternoons starting February 2, 2023 and ending March 2, 2023 from 1-2:30 in the upstairs Dining Room at the Goshen Town Hall. It is recommended (but not required) that you read the book which is available at local libraries, on Kindle or Nook, and there is an audiobook version. Please register by emailing Peg at pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com or calling/texting her at 413-404-4566. Messages left should include your name, cell/home phone number, and your email address. **Adults of all ages from all towns are welcome to register.**

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MEDICARE/MEDICAL EQUIPMENT SCAM

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- You get a call offering to send you a free medical alert system, a free back brace, or other medical equipment.
- The caller tells you they will bill Medicare & send you the equipment for free.
- They just need your Medicare or Social Security number in order to process your order.

Beware of Medicare Phone Scams!

If someone calls you & asks for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up & call 1-800-MEDICARE.



WHAT TO DO

- Hang up! Don't give out personal information such as your Medicare or Social Security number over the phone.
- Beware of "free" offers.
- Ask your doctor if you think you need a brace or any medical device.

Consumer problem or question? Call the Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit.
Greenfield (413) 774-3186 Northampton (413) 586-9225
Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General.

