

Cummington Council on Aging

February 2023 Newsletter



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

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

We need your feedback! All tech users and non-tech users - Please respond to survey!

In early January, a COA questionnaire about aging and technology was mailed to everyone in town age 60 and over. Even if you do not use technology, there are relevant questions for you. If you have not returned it, please complete it and **send it back by Feb.15th** or as close to that date as possible. The information is important to the COA in arranging for future technology support and education. The questions also may be answered online at <https://tinyurl.com/3pkwfxk7> If you would prefer to respond to this survey over the phone, call the COA office at 634-2262 and leave a message. Thank you to those who already have participated and returned your questionnaire. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to participate as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the COA at croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov or leave a message at 634-2262.

Announcing technology support!

Now available at no cost! Once a month, technical support with computers and technology will be available at the Community House. **Peg Whalen is working with the COA** to assist with questions about technology devices and their use, including smartphones, mobile phones, iPads, tablets, ePhoto frames, smart TVs, printing, laptops, internet and many apps and software programs. **She is available between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Community House (conference room next to the kitchen), starting on February 21st.** Upcoming dates: March 21 and April 18. Call or text Peg at **413-404-4566** or send email to nhill-coastech@gmail.com in advance to schedule enough time for help with your specific needs.



Games Day- Note change in day

Now every **fourth** Tuesday of the Month,
February through April, 1-3 p.m.

(Feb. 28, Mar. 28, Apr. 25)

Cummington Community House Dining Room

Pick up your Grab n' Go Meal and stay to play some games or come just for the games. Connect with old friends and make new friends. Feel free to bring your favorite game!



Art show

A small group of mostly seniors has been gathering at the Community House this past year learning how to draw and paint with acrylic paint under the sponsorship of the COA. Jeanne Johns, who has been giving art lessons for more than 55 years, is the teacher. The work has progressed to the point of exhibition level. There is great individuality and creativity. Everyone is welcome to come to the reception on **Friday, February 3rd from 5-7 p.m. at the Cummington Community House.** The art will remain on display in the Community House until the end of February.

Save the Date!

The COA's next potluck will be on **Wednesday, March 15th from noon to 1:30.** Look for details in the next newsletter.

Senior Snowshoeing

Weds. Feb. 8 and Feb. 22 in Goshen at DAR

Hilltown Land Trust and All Out Adventures are offering a series of snowshoe treks on Wednesday mornings at the DAR state forest. Two treks per day, departing at 10 am and 12 pm. on Feb. 8 and 22nd. Please arrive 15 minutes early. No cost; donation to All Out Adventures is appreciated. Snowshoes, poles and traction aids are provided for

free. Registration is required: contact **413-584-2052** or info@alloutadventures.org. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah at sarah@hilltownlandtrust.org

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:

-**NEW ON THE CART:** consumer protection calendars for 2023

-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!

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, February 14th** and **Tuesday, February 28th**.

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 **February 7th**. 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

The next foot clinic will be in March with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$50. Contact the COA to make an appointment.

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully

The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tuesday, February 14th**. For more information on this program, contact directly Wynne or Lucy at 634-5576 or wynlucy@gmail.com; or Annie at annieb@crocker.com.

Happy Birthday in February!

Carol Piacentini, Carolyn Wolf, Bernie Forgea, Joan Strong, Roger Gunn, Barbara Sprague, Ernie Strong, Christine Brandon, Bill Adams, Donn Boulanger, Geraldine Wilcox, Patricia Corley, Judith Pasko, Ken Howes, Debra Howes, Ed Konieczny, Richard Frary, Rox-Anne Kellogg, Michael Kolodny, Christopher Bagg, Frank Noel, Michael Tattan, James Nelson, Frank Quaglia, Russell Jordan, Donald Scheidel



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

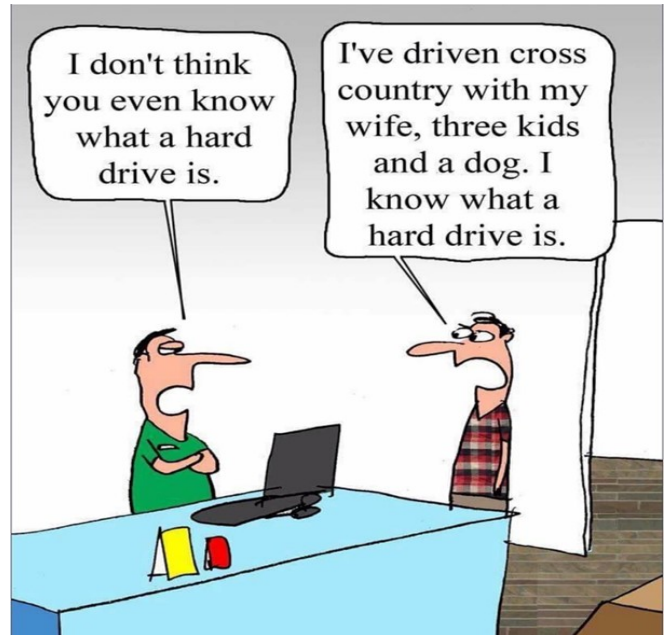
Out and About this Winter



www.clarkart.edu
413-458-2303

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!



Tiny footprints

As soon as a child is born and their photo is posted online, they have a digital footprint. While we enjoy seeing a new baby's smiling face or a toddler smelling a flower, their digital footprint can be hacked. That is just the very sad story of how our technology today can be misused. A scammer can set up a fake identity, therefore messing up the child's future finances before they are even earning any money. A baby's digital image can be altered and used in pornography.

A recent article in the Washington Post was sobering. They projected over 7 million cases of identity fraud by 2030, costing victims more than \$900 million. It is believed that over half the porn images online in one country were photoshopped from social media. This is from a book by Leah Plunkett Sharenthood: *Why We Should Think Before We Talk About Our Kids Online*.

So what should parents and other family members do?

1. Be CAREFUL when posting online even if you think you are safe. Do not post full names, birthdays, ages, or specific locations.
2. Set up privacy settings on your social media. See this page- www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/guides/online-security-social-media-privacy/ Even setting privacy controls is no guarantee the child is safe. The controls can be complicated and change, and even if a crook can't download an image, they can take a new photo of what was posted and photoshop it.
3. Take another look at passwords. Many times people use birthplace, school name, favorite pet, etc. in a password. These are things commonly written about in a post; 3 or 4 pieces of information may be all that is needed by the hacker to steal an identity.

In all seriousness,
 Jean O'Neil
 TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228

February's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

It's that time of year again when we are gathering what we need to file our tax returns, and I received a request for information on the Circuit Breaker which I wrote about last March. This year's potential Circuit Breaker rebate may be even bigger than previous years, so this is the time to look into it and see if you might qualify.

Circuit Breaker Fact Sheet

"You may get a cash refund on your State income taxes."

The Massachusetts Circuit Breaker Income Tax Credit for Homeowners age 65 and older is a program for those seniors whose property taxes and half of the water/sewer bills equal more than 10% of their annual gross income. You can get this refundable tax credit even if you do not owe State income taxes. You can file a tax return even if you do not have taxable income.

Last year the maximum refund was \$1,162, but Governor Baker has recommended in his 2023 budget that this be increased to a maximum of \$2400.

If you have not filed/applied for the Circuit Breaker before, this is the year to do it!

You are eligible if:

- ⇒ you are 65 or older
- ⇒ own your home
- ⇒ are current with your property taxes
- ⇒ and if your property taxes are more than 10% of your income
- ⇒ your income needs to be less than \$62,000 single, or \$93,000 married filing a joint income tax return
- ⇒ and if your home is assessed at less than \$884,000

You apply by:

- ⇒ filing a Massachusetts Income Tax return
- ⇒ and including a schedule CB
- ⇒ you must supply copy of your property tax bill
- ⇒ also your water/sewer bill if you have one
- ⇒ and provide income verification

February Tech Talk by Peg Whalen

The holidays can bring technology, often wanted and sometimes unexpected gifts of technology devices. Family and friends can be excited to share their love of technology by gifting us ePhoto Frames, new and previously owned iPads, smartphones, laptops, kindles, and other devices we may be reluctant to use. If you are someone that received a device you have little interest in or limited understanding about using, there is help.

From February through June 2023, and perhaps beyond, each COA in the northern hilltowns has scheduled a recurring week and day each month for in-town technical support. I will be offering individual time for interested people to come, free of charge, and begin getting the assistance, guidance, and reassurance to get started or learn more in a way that is understandable and effective. If learning one-one-one is your preferred way to increase your understanding about technology, sign up for a time slot in your own or a neighboring town. Walk-ins may or may not be accommodated so call or email ahead to ensure you get the time you need. **Contact Peg Whalen: 413-404-4566 or nhillcoatech@gmail.com.**



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.)

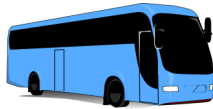
Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

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

On the Road Again... 2023 Trips



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

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. Arrive 11:15am. Luncheon will include whole steamed LOBSTER, & chicken & ribs. Make payment to FNCS for **\$78** which is due NOW so we can get good seats. Mail to the address above. **PLEASE NOTE CORRECT PRICING.** It was previously listed as \$120.

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 FNCS for \$120 due NOW, so we can get good seats. Mail to the address above.

Day Trip July 20. Lake George Cruise- Take a 2 1/2 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. The Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. A stop at the Lake George Outlets. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$TBD due **April 21st**. Mail to the address above.

Day Trip August 10 Garden in the Woods- This trip includes a walking guided tour of the Garden in the Woods in Framingham followed by a luncheon at the Longfellow's Wayside Inn. Entrée choices are Roast Prime Rib of Beef or Baked Atlantic Salmon. Two floors of historical exhibits to explore at the inn. A stop at Hebert Candy Mansion. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$122 due **June 10th**. Mail to the address above.

Day Trip September. BIG E. A YEARLY favorite. Make payment to FNCS for \$TBD by **August 1st**. Mail to the address above.

Multi Day September 29-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 motorcoach while on tour, sightseeing, admission to shows and tour escort. \$500 deposit by **March 15, 2023**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

Day Trip November. Elvis The Musical- North Shore Theater. An exciting musical in Beverly, MA where you will hear 40 of Elvis' hits. Make payment to First Choice for \$TBD by **July 21st**. Mail to the address above.



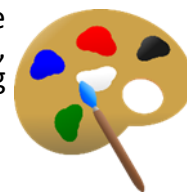
LENA
GARCIA

Playing with Art! Give it a try!

A Taste of Oil Painting Workshop

Wednesday, February 8th 10:30am-12:30pm

Explore Oil Painting and see if this is a medium for you! I know I can be intimidated by a new art medium; where do I begin? How do I use it? Come experience this fascinating medium in a calm and supportive atmosphere. Oil painting has a slow and relaxed tempo. It is flexible and very forgiving. Using provided materials, participants will make a painting of a simple still life. Demonstrations on sketching your still life, mixing your paints, and painting with the oil paints will be given while participants try out all these skills and work on their monochromatic or black and white painting. Try something new, stretch your brain all while having a good time!



Oil Painting Class

Mondays, April 3 - June 12th from 1 -3pm
(no class 5/29)

More details coming soon!

Shadow Puppetry Workshop

Saturday, May 20th from 10am - 12pm

Multigenerational event for anyone who can use an exacto knife (10yrs and up)
More details coming soon!

Registration for all at www.lenagarcia.com
or call: **425-977-5120**

*All events at the Chesterfield Community Center.
Sponsored by the Chesterfield COA and partially funded by Highland Valley Elder 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**

Chrisoula Roumeliotis,
Coordinator
634-2262

Worth Noyes, Chairperson
634-8003

Ann Eisenhour,
Recording Secretary,
Foot Care Coordinator
634-2243

Gail Roberge, Treasurer
512-0660

June Lynds, 695-4893

Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

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

SCAM ALERT!



Watch out for Computer Virus Scams!

*You might get a call, email, or a message
that appears on your screen.*

*It says there's a problem with your computer
& they can help you fix it.*

- Just hang up or delete the message.
- Don't click on links in an email.
- Don't call the telephone number on the screen.
- Never give someone control of your computer.
- Don't share passwords or log-ins.
- Keep your computer, tablet, & mobile phone security programs up to date.

*If you have a
consumer problem or
question, contact 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**

