

Cummington Council on Aging

August 2023 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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Summer Dance

Friday, August 11th,
5:30-8:30pm
Pettingill Memorial Park

Snacks & beverages provided

DJ Bobby C—
music for everyone!

All ages! Free!



Dance to some oldies! We are repeating last year's successful dance! You are all invited to a dance at the pavilion at Pettingill Park on Friday, August 11th from 5:30 to 8:30. DJ Bobby C will be playing songs from the 50s to current music – something for everyone! Beverages and snacks will be provided. Feel free to bring a picnic dinner. Bring your kids, grandkids and neighbors – everyone is invited! If your feet are tired or you are not in a dancing mood, join us anyway and listen to some music while visiting with friends and neighbors. We look forward to seeing you there!

***Paid for by a generous grant from
Highland Valley Elder Services.***

Great news: Newsletter Funding has been secured!

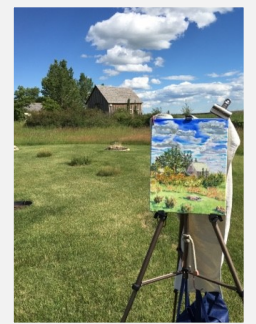
Thanks to the tireless work of many people, the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs has secured a Service Incentive Grant from the Massachusetts Council on Aging, which will ensure that the print copy of this newsletter continues to arrive in your mailbox every month for another year.



En plein air Painting Workshop coming this fall

The COA was awarded a generous grant from the Cummington Cultural District Committee for en plein air, or “in the open air,” painting workshop. Participants will set up folding tables, chairs and easels along Main Street and paint the scene.

This is currently scheduled to take place on **September 30 and October 1** from **9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, with rain dates to be determined. Each day will begin with instruction and guidance by Jeanne Johns, who will also be available throughout the two days to answer questions, have conversations and offer advice on developing the artwork. The completed work will subsequently be on display at the Community House. The COA will supply canvases, paint, brushes and palettes, as well as some easels. You will need to provide a folding table and chair and possibly an easel. If you are interested in participating in this weekend workshop (all skill levels are welcome!) or would like more information, please contact the COA at **croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov** or **634-2262** by **August 31st**. Pre-registration is required.



Save the Date

On **Saturday, September 9th at 3pm.**, **Roger Tincknell** will be joining us for an “Old Time Sing-along” at the Community House. Lyrics will be provided! Bring your ukulele! Open to all ages. *Paid for by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services.*

Community Notices

Open House 80th Birthday Gathering for Jeannette Horton – Sat. August 5th, 12-6pm
Deer Hill Rod & Gun Club on Porter Hill Road.

Celebration of Life of Mary Esther Streeter --
Saturday, August 19th, 11am
Village Church on Main Street.

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.

Weekly Grab and Go Hot Meal– Every Tuesday
The next meals will be distributed on August 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. Leave your name and phone number with the COA by **July 26th** to reserve your meal. Suggested donation of \$3 per meal goes to HVES.

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.

Technology Support- Contact Peg Whalen via email at pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com (preferred) or by phone at 413-404-4566 for help with your technical questions.

Foot Clinic- The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, Sept. 5th** with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$40 for Cummington residents and \$50 for non-residents. Contact the COA to make an appointment.

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully
The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tuesday, August 8th**. For more information on this program, contact directly Wynne or Lucy at **634-5576** or wynlucy@gmail.com; or Annie at annieb@crocker.com.

Resource Cart- Located across from the Community House kitchen and to the left of the COA office. Currently, it is stocked with Covid test kits, hand sanitizer, personal health care journals, file of life forms, walking maps, games & puzzles, greeting cards for various occasions, the current Elder Law education guide, and more. Anytime the building is open, you can come by to take what you need from this cart.

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.

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 August!

Ann Kohn, Jeanette Horton, Lucy Fandel, Ann Eisenhour, Joel Hinton, David Sprague, Maureen Horak, Dennis Gero, James Drawe, Susan Boulanger, George Thorn, Jan Storm, Beverly Prentice, Victor Morrill, Lenora Cote, Richard Sheppard, Mark Bevan, Michael Augspurger, Christopher Robertson, Anne Barbour, Lynn LaFountain, Tammy Reid, Marcia Winseck, Susanna Matthews



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



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!

Your State Representatives

State Senator Paul Mark

Email: paul.mark@masenate.gov

Phone: 413-464-5635

Mail: 773 Tyler Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:
Williamsburg Town Hall
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

State Representative Lindsay Sadosa

Email: Lindsay.Sadosa@mahouse.gov

Phone: 413-270-1166.

Mail: 76 Gothic Street
Northampton, MA 01060

Artificial Intelligence

You've read about it, here it is! Actually, it has been here for awhile. I spoke a text on my phone, trying to say "Cats really know how to nap". The first word appeared on my screen as Katz but by the time I finished my sentence it had changed to Cats. That is a form of AI.

We see it in autocorrect, when our email recognizes an address we start to type, or when Siri figures out who to call. When we have to select all the images with a sidewalk in them to continue to the web page we want, that is a form of AI. Many Applications (Apps) use AI.

In addition to these useful and positive activities, doctors are using AI to help prepare their case notes and discharge papers, saving them time. A recent study at the Mayo Clinic used AI to supplement physician readings for colon cancer and found more polyps than the doctor did. Maps and navigation tools have given us benefits in ease and accuracy of use. E-banking allows us to bank from home.

ON THE OTHER HAND, as AI becomes more sophisticated, it can cause problems. The ability to clone voices is growing so scammers can use AI to duplicate voices and facial images of a grandchild and really alarm a grandparent into sending money. Voice cloning can trick us into sending money to a friend who calls. We are already seeing campaign ads done by AI that show fake photos and videos, helping to spread misinformation and false events.

Things are only going to get worse as potentially very useful Artificial Intelligence gets co-opted for nefarious purposes. Remember last month's note on mindset? We need to keep our Game Brain engaged!

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

Another Conversation about Memory Scheduled for the Fall!

More than 90 people signed up for the conference on June 22. The Community Center could only accommodate 60 people, leaving 26 on a waiting list. The keynote by Dr. Starr, combined with presentations by Sharon Asher and Deb Hollingworth, set the stage for a day that made it easy to talk about a wide range of sensitive issues. By all measures it was a success.



When asked to evaluate the day, these were some of the comments:

“Better than expected.”

“Almost as good as someone by my side to do what’s needed.”

“I’ve been working with people with memory problems for a long time and I actually learned something new today.”

“Made me realize my brain is better than my body.”

What was most helpful?

- Dr. Starr answered important questions
- Description of brain function
- Gentle but firm presentations of facts
- Positive focus of the day
- Chatting with others at my table
- What to expect if this happens to someone in your family
- The presenters did not catastrophize Dementia
- Deb’s experience with her parents

More information wanted:

- Home care resources; where to start, who pays, what’s available
- Finding local in home care services in the Region
- Programs that pay caregivers
- Supportive housing options
- Later life planning help understanding health insurance
- How to make ends meet with dwindling Finances
- Discussions about depression and “nervousness”
- How to find individual counseling for planning for the next stage
- Learning how to talk with someone with memory impairments

- How to respond to tense and difficult interactions
- Common caregiving stresses and how to get help
- Financial pitfalls, protections and planning for long term care
- Affordable options when continued care at home is not possible
- Use of light and touch therapies

Next Steps

First and foremost the conference will be repeated in the fall!

Plans are underway to provide monthly small group forums to dig deeper into the topics listed above and more. Look for the plan in the next issue.

I’m at the place
in my life where
Errands count as
“Going Out”

IF THERE WAS A PILL TO CURE
PROCRASTINATION, I WOULD
PROBABLY TAKE IT TOMORROW.



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 August 24. **Saratoga Racetrack**, Saratoga Springs, NY. This trip includes lunch at the Inn at Saratoga. Entrée choices are Chicken Normandy or Pasta a la Saratoga. After lunch, spend time at the racetrack in our reserved grandstand seats. Over 60 concession stands on the grounds. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$130 due **NOW**.*

*Day Trip September TBD. **The Big E**, an annual favorite, with free entertainment at Honor Court Stage. Watch for details. Tentative date September 22. We will depart from the Big E at 4pm.*

*Multi Day Trip September 10-12. **Nantucket Island. REDUCED PRICE. 3 days- 2 nights.** Includes ferry to and from the island, guided tour of the island and all access pass to historical sites. Make payment to First Choice for \$689 p/p double occupancy due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. Limited seats.*

*Multi Day Trip 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. Due **NOW**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat. **Two seats remain.***

*Day Trip October 9. **Lake George Cruise** - Take a 2.5 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. A Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. Special pricing for Worthington Seniors \$75, for all other seniors the cost is \$125. Make your check out to Landmark Tours and mail to Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098 by September 5th. Two pick up locations-- Worthington and Northampton. A similar trip sold out recently, so reserve early. For further information contact Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962.*

*Day Trip November 4. **Elvis- A Musical Revolution- North Shore Theater.** An exciting musical in Beverly, MA where you will hear 40 of Elvis' hits. Lunch at Danversport Yacht Club included. Make \$259 payment to First Choice **NOW**. Mail to the address above. A few seats remain.*

~~COMING IN 2024~~

*Multi Day Trip May 2024. **Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island & New Brunswick. Passport required.** Cost TBD per person dbl. occupancy.*

This 9 day trip includes: 8 nights lodging including 5 nights in Canada, one night stay in Maine coming and going. 14 meals including: 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners. Guided Tour of Acadia National Park, Guided Tour of Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg.

~~Since Lake George and Lake Sunapee were so popular and sold out in 2023, I will run these two trips in 2024.~~

Consortium website opens door to "rooms" full of information

Thanks to the work of Peg Whalen, the seven hilltowns of northwest Hampshire County, from Westhampton to Plainfield, Worthington to Williamsburg, are rolling out their redesigned website, <https://northernhilltownscoas.org> This website gives easy, early access to all the Councils on Aging newsletters, in full color, every month. The website also has a section for each town, CHESTERFIELD, CUMMINGTON, GOSHEN, PLAINFIELD, WESTHAMPTON, WILLIAMSBURG, and WORTHINGTON, with NEWS and announcements, CALENDARS, NEWSLETTERS, contact information, photos, and links to important in-town resources and events. The website supplies users access to written information, instructions, video about topics on GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED, links to USEFUL WEBSITES and services access, and many other information sources and volunteer opportunities. The site also describes special INITIATIVES the seven COAs are taking part in, cross-town calendars, and regional news.

Related to Tech Tips, the site has a TECHNOLOGY section dedicated to supporting aging in a digital world, with technical support sources, how-to instructions, workshop video, visual and written handouts about devices and tech uses, links to existing online sources for technology classes, training and technical assistance, and shortly, will have a calendar of scheduled local trainings. Please visit the website regularly and get familiar with its resources. You can reach the site at

<https://northernhilltownscoas.org> (Note, both hilltowns and COAs have "s" after their name, use care in entering the website.) We suggest you bookmark the website so you can quickly and return often to check on the wide variety of activities and services the area COAs are offering.

If you currently are unable to access the internet, your local library can help you visit the website. If you have suggestions or comments about the website, please share them on the site or let your COA know. This website is for EVERYONE in our seven towns. We invite you to help us tailor it to meet the needs and expectations of all the older adults we serve.

Please note, technical support is ongoing throughout the summer, by appointment only. Pre-arranged hours will resume in the fall. Contact your COA or reach out to Peg Whalen for assistance at

pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com or text your name and questions to **413-296-5080**.

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

SCAM ALERT!



Protect Yourself & Avoid a Scam

- Screen your calls & hang up if the caller tries to pressure you.
- Block unwanted calls & text messages.
- Don't give out personal information over the phone, through email or text message.
- Resist the pressure to act quickly.
- Stop & talk about the situation with a friend or family member.
- Never pay someone you don't know by gift card, wiring money or cryptocurrency.

*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**

