

# Cummington Council on Aging

## February 2024 Newsletter



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

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## Soup or Chili Cook-off!

**Wednesday, February 21st, Noon to 1:30**  
*Community House*

Do you have a soup or chili recipe that your friends and relatives rave about? Please cook it up and bring it to our COOK-OFF! Or, come just to eat!



If you are interested in entering your soup or chili in the contest, please let us know by February 14th by calling the COA office at 634-2262 or emailing [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov). If you wish to just eat and vote for your favorite, you do not need to let us know in advance. There will be a prize for the top vote-getter! The COA will provide crackers and cornbread. We look forward to seeing you there! Remember to give us a heads-up if you'd like to enter the contest. Or, come to just eat and vote. (Snow date: Feb. 28th).

## The Old Creamery Bag Share Sew

We are hosting a bag making/sewing day on **Saturday, February 24th** from noon to 5 at the Community House. The Old Creamery Co-op and the Bag Share Project are looking for your help to make a batch of reusable bags that are offered for use at the Creamery. No experience is necessary. All materials and sewing machines will be provided. Just bring yourself and anyone you think might enjoy an afternoon of crafty fun in the spirit of helping the community and the environment. This event is organized by the Old Creamery Board of Directors, along with Leni Fried, who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience. We will be there from noon to 5; come for as much or as little of it as you are able!

## Program highlight – Grab & Go meals

Every Tuesday, we have a group of regulars swing by the Community House to pick up their

tasty to-go meals. Some upcoming meals for February include eggplant parmesan, potato leek soup, Swedish meatballs, and pulled pork. These meals are prepared by Highland Valley Elder Services, with options available for those with diabetes. Please reach out if you would like more info or to sign up: [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) or 634-2262. These meals are free, although there is a suggested donation of \$3, which goes to HVES.

## Sand deliveries available

The Council on Aging and the Fire Department continue to deliver sand to town residents who are 60 years old and over. If you are interested in this program, please contact the Council on Aging at 634-2262 and leave your name, telephone number and street address.

## Community event:

**Conradance** at the Community House on **February 24th** from 5pm to 11pm. All ages are welcome. Come to dance or to listen and watch!



**Hilltown Elder Network caregivers are needed** for light housework in both Cummington and Plainfield. This helpful and gratifying work pays \$16/hour. If interested, please contact Sandy Powers, coordinator, for an application and CORI form: [Ssndypwrs1@gmail.com](mailto:Ssndypwrs1@gmail.com), 413-207-2944.



## Save the Dates:

- **St. Patrick's Day potluck luncheon** –  
*Wednesday, March 20th, Noon to 1:30*
- **Spring fling dance**–  
*Friday, April 12th from 7-9 p.m., for all ages.*

## Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources

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

**Weekly Grab and Go Hot Meal– every Tuesday**  
The next meals will be distributed on **February 6, 13, 20 and 27** between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. Leave your name and phone number with the COA by **January 31st** 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– NOTE: NEW DAY**  
Thursdays, 1-4pm.

**Technology support**  
See the regional section of this newsletter for up-to-date information on technology resources, including computer classes, technology support and more. Contact Peg Whalen: 413-296-5080 or [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com) for additional information or with questions.

**Foot Clinic**  
The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, March 5th** with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$40 for Cumington 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, February 13th**. For more information on this program, contact directly Wynne or Lucy at **634-5576** or [wynlucy@gmail.com](mailto:wynlucy@gmail.com); or Annie at [annieb@crocker.com](mailto:annieb@crocker.com).

**Resource Cart** *Look by the windows, too!*  
Located across from the Community House kitchen and to the left of the COA office – available to you anytime the building is open. Stocked with Covid test kits, medical/surgical masks, 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, pamphlets and informational sheets on a variety of subjects, consumer calendars and much more.

**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 and medical errands (such as picking up prescriptions) when the van is not available. Contact Ed Pelletier at 296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

## **Happy Birthday in February!**

Carol Piacentini, Carolyn Wolf, Bernie Forgea, Joan Strong, Barbara Sprague, Ernie Strong, Christine Brandon, Bill Adams, Donn Boulanger, Geraldine Wilcox, Patricia Corley, Judith Pasko, Beth Eisenberg, 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, James Ryan



***The Cumington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue our important programs for local seniors!***

**I would like to contribute to the Cumington COA. My contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is attached.**  
*(Please write your check to the Cumington Council on Aging, and mail to Cumington COA, PO Box 95, Cumington, MA 01026)*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for helping to Support Your Neighbors!*

The Cumington Council on Aging

## Technology Help and Training for February



### Tech Drop in Center Hours:

*(no appointment needed)*

- Weekly on Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00 at 400 Main Rd Chesterfield Community Center
- Meekins Library Drop-In tech support on Tuesday 2/13 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg
- Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Thurs 2/22 from 10:00 to Noon

### Tech Training:

- Beginner's Windows Computer Class continues, weekly Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00, Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class sign-up starts now, classes to begin in March.

Must register for classes or workshops.

Email [coaTechConnect@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechConnect@gmail.com); call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org)

Must register one week before the scheduled training date.

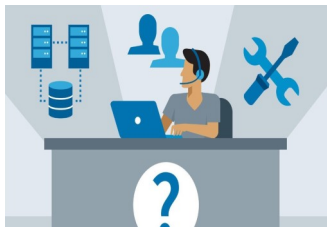
### Tech Help Requests or Volunteering:

- Support available by email: [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com), phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within 24 hours.
- See our updated website [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org) to sign up online as a volunteer or to request tech assistance.

### Event Save The Date:

On **Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>** we will be holding a **Tech Connect event** with vendors, mini-workshops, information, and activities at New Hingham Elementary School, Smith Rd, in Chesterfield.

Watch for more information in the coming month.



**Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, by email instead of snail mail?**

If so, please email Kristen at [regionalcoanews@gmail.com](mailto: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!



### **Seniors Aware of Fire Education**

We were now in "Open Burning Season" which began Jan. 15 and ends May 1. This is the time in which you may burn brush, cane, driftwood and forest debris outside. It is against the law to burn construction material or debris. Here are some safety tips for outdoor burns:



- Get a burning permit from your town. They are issued on a daily basis based on weather conditions.
- An adult must attend the fire until it is totally extinguished.
- Have fire control materials at hand — water supply, rakes, and shovels.
- Pick an open area 40 feet from any structure in which to build the fire.
- Do NOT use gasoline or any other combustible liquid to start the fire.
- If the wind picks up, be ready to quickly extinguish the fire.
- If the fire gets out of control, immediately call for help - 911.

The reason I have chosen Open Burning Season for the February topic is because the best time to prevent wild, out-of-control fires is to burn during wet, snowy conditions. These conditions help keep the fire from rapidly spreading on and under ground.

You even have one more day in February to be fire S.A.F.E.!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator  
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

*The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.*



## Love is in the Air, but also...

It is the Valentine season again! Love it. But there are issues for some folks around this time of year. One of our friends, a very educated and smart but lonely guy, joined a dating service. He went 0 for 4 on successful interactions. I asked him if he had any advice to share, and this is what he sent.

"I would like to share my thoughts on online dating. My experiences have not been good. I have had four horrible experiences and unfortunately I got burned big time on one of them. The patterns as I look back are similar. Unfortunately you tend to ignore red flags until it is too late. The following patterns are serious red flags:

1. All of them start off by telling you how nice it is to meet you. "You are the first person since my husband died that I feel a real connection to." "Let's move slow before we move to texting, phone before meeting." Always a hint of being flirtatious.
2. They ask a lot of questions about you but are very vague about themselves.
3. They send photos, nothing inappropriate, but ask for none in return.
4. No interest in your past relationships (like why am I online), have been married, kids, etc.
5. When texting, you respond within a reasonable period of time, they respond sometimes hours later with one or two words. They rarely ever respond by using your name, appears to be honey, babe, etc.
6. when texting for specific information, they immediately respond with a text so lengthy, you wonder if it has been scripted.
7. In my case, all have appeared to either been self-employed and/or business owners, and some emergency has come up. "I know we have known each other a short period of time, but can you send me...?"
8. When I have asked for the local address or to send me a copy of their driver's license, I get responses like, "I have trust issues", "If we are going to be life partners, why can't you do this?" etc.

The last one was really good. We had telephone conversations, etc. We were supposed to get together like the next day or a weekend. She called me to say her work required her to go out of town. Shortly thereafter, a panic phone call of an emergency where she needed to borrow \$5,500 until she returned home.

Hope this helps. I have no more shame to hide. By the way, I decided to give up online dating."

Be safe, y'all.

Jean O'Neil

TRIAD Committee member

jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228



### February's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Recently I've had questions about lifeline services; what they cost and how to get them if you don't have a land line anymore. There are several possibilities including subsidies for both your land line bill and/or your wireless/Smart phone bill. Utility companies are mandated to provide discounts for low income customers. So if you live in subsidized housing or receive SNAP benefits or have MassHealth, you qualify. This applies to both a land line or a wireless bill. To get more information and help applying, you can call Verizon at 1-800 Safe-Link. ((1-800-723-3546). If Verizon is your phone carrier, they will discount your bill. However, the discount is only about \$10/month for a land line, and \$5.50/month for wireless. If you have a Smart phone you might explore apps that act as a lifeline.

For folks who have a land line, but can't afford the Lifeline service fee of about \$30/month, Highland Valley offers to pay for lifeline if you have a medical condition that makes you susceptible to falls. If you call Highland Valley Elder Services at 413-586-2000, you can ask to speak to their Benefits counselor who may have more suggestions on how to cut costs. Also, MassHealth will pay for a lifeline if your doctor orders it. (Like getting a prescription from your doctor).

Lifeline works when you fall at home, but there are additional features for mobile lifelines in case your car breaks down, or you sprain an ankle while hiking in the woods and need help. The GPS feature can guide emergency responders to your location.

With luck, you may never need to use your lifeline. But you and your family and friends will have some peace of mind knowing you have one.

## On the Road Again...

### 2024 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 April 5 or 15th. Culinary Institute of America--* Enjoy a "CIA" experience with lunch at Catarina DeMedici. Free time to explore the bookstore and bake shop. The \$125 Payment to Francine Frenier is due by February 20th. Please mail a check to the address above. This trip will depart from S. Hadley.

*Day Trip Tuesday, May 14. Neil Diamond -The Tribute from Las Vegas* - Rob Garrett, known as the King of Diamonds, performs at the Aqua Turf Club, CT. Family style meal of Chicken ala Kathryn & Broiled Scrod included. The \$137 Payment to FNCS is due by March 12. Please mail them to the address above. **Two seats available.**

*Nine Day Trip May 29- June 6, 2024. Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island & New Brunswick. Passport required. Check your expiration date.* Cost \$1,644, per person dbl. occupancy - \$25 discount if paid in full by **February 20th**. Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **Four openings.**

*Day Trip Thursday June 13. Timeless Music Pop to Broadway* – Luncheon and Show at Storrowton Tavern Carriage House in W. Springfield. Self-drive or carpool. Cost is \$77 made out to Chesterfield COA and mailed to address above. Chesterfield seniors: please call for pricing.

*Day Trip Thursday, July 11th. Lake Sunapee Luncheon Cruise- Vermont Country Store.* A two hour luncheon cruise on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. This trip includes Luncheon buffet and a stop at the Vermont Country Store. The \$118 Payment to Landmark Tours is due by May 10. Please mail to the address above. **This trip sold out last year, so reserve early.**

*Day Trip Wednesday, August 7th. Resorts World Casino-- Catskills, NY trip.* Can you get enough of **Elvis**? Enjoy a lovely ride to the Catskills. Included: King in Concert show, Buffet Lunch and \$25 free slot play, driver gratuity. The \$145 Payment to FNCS is due by May 5. Please mail to the address above. Please include your date of birth for the player card. **THIS TRIP IS A GO.**

*Day Trip October TBD. Lake George Cruise-* Take a 2 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. The Captain's Luncheon Buffet

will be served on board. Keyboard entertainer performs. Stops at scenic Prospect Mountain and the Lake George Outlets with 30 stores to explore. The \$131 payment to Landmark Tours is due by August 19th. Please mail to the address above. **This trip sold out last year, so reserve early.**

*Four Day Trip September 30- October 3. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound production of the biblical show Daniel.* Cost \$646, per person dbl. occupancy - \$25 discount if paid in full by **June 20th**. Includes: Sight & Sound Theater show, tour of Philadelphia, time in Hershey's Chocolate World, 6 meals, hotels, driver gratuity. **Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. Call now to reserve your spot.**

*Day Trip Friday December 13. Festival of Trees and Red Rose Lunch.* Enjoy the uniquely decorated Christmas Trees at the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield. Enter a chance to win a tree and associated gifts. Some are worth hundreds of dollars. Then walk over to the Red Rose Italian Restaurant for lunch: pizza, salad and bread. The \$TBD Payment is due by October 25. Please mail to the address above.

## Do you know about the Hilltown Driver Pool Program?

This is a door-to-door service provided by members of your community looking to support your occasional transportation needs to important medical appointments, related errands and trips to the grocery store. Residents from the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale, Peru, Plainfield, Windsor, Westhampton and Worthington who are ambulatory and at least 60 years of age are eligible for service. This is a grant-funded program; suggested donations range from \$5-\$10. Interested in being a driver? Schedules can be very flexible. For services or more information about supporting this program as a driver reach out to Ed Pelletier at **(413) 296-4232** or email: [ride@hilltowncdc.org](mailto:ride@hilltowncdc.org).



### Please take this Hilltown CDC survey:

The Hilltown CDC is applying for funding that supports important programs in our community: the Goshen Food Pantry, the HEN Program, Health Outreach Program and the Housing Rehabilitation Program. You **do not** have to be a recipient of these programs, but **you do** need to be a Hilltown resident. Please take a few moments to share your important feedback and support of this valuable Hilltown resources:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KTMT25C>

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**P.O. Box 95**  
**Cummington, MA 01026**

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# CHARITY SCAM

You get a call from a charity looking for donations. Scammers try to fool you into giving money using these tactics:

- They rush you into making a donation;
- They use names that sound like a real charity;
- They change the caller ID to make you think it's a local caller.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE SURE THE MONEY IS GOING TO A GOOD CAUSE?

- Research the charity before donating;
- Verify that the organization is registered with the MA Attorney General's Office;
- Look up the charity online & read what others are saying about it.



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