

# Cummington Council on Aging

## March 2024 Newsletter



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

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## St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Wednesday, March 20th, 11:30am  
Community House

Join us for our annual St. Patrick's Day potluck luncheon. The COA board members will be cooking a delicious corned beef meal. In addition to the corned beef, there will be cabbage, potatoes, carrots, onions and Irish soda bread. If you can, please bring a side dish or dessert to share.



As always, this will be in the Community House dining room. **We will be starting at 11:30 with some appetizers and time for socializing. Lunch will be served at noon. Around 12:30, Roger Tincknell will present his program "Ireland to America."** This is a festive music program of traditional and contemporary Irish and Irish American songs and instrumentals performed on guitar, banjo, mandolin, harmonica, Irish bouzouki, Bodhran (Irish drum), spoons, and Irish Limberjack (wooden "dancing" instrument). We look forward to seeing you there!

*This program is supported in part by a grant from the Cummington Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.*

### Program highlight – Exercise equipment

Looking to increase your strength, mobility, and flexibility at home?

We have several pedal exercise machines available for you to borrow. A pedal exerciser is essentially a portable exercise bike that is placed on the floor and engages your lower body, while you sit in your own chair. You can also set it on a table and pedal with your arms. It is easy to use, and folds up quite small when not in use.

You can also borrow hand-weight sets. Each set

includes 1-pound, 3-pound and 5-pound hand weights that sit in a rack stand when not in use. If you are interested in borrowing this equipment, please contact the COA at 634-2262 or croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov.

### Save the Dates!

**Spring fling dance** –For those of you who have attended our summer dances, you know how much fun they are! Soon, it will be warm enough for a dance at the pavilion. In the meantime, join us on **Friday, April 12th from 7-9** for a spring-time dance at the Community House. DJ Bobby C will be playing songs for all ages. Bring your kids, grandkids and neighbors – everyone is invited! We look forward to seeing you there! *Paid for by a generous grant from Highland Valley Elder Services.*

**Needle felting class**– In this class, you will learn how to needle-felt "Sheepy People" -- a miniature version of the sheep that were displayed at the parsonage. This is for all levels and materials will be included in the cost. Look for more details in upcoming newsletters for this class, which will be held in May.

### 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 **March 5, 12, 19, and 26** between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. Leave your name and phone number with the COA by **February 28th** 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.**

**Sand deliveries**

The Fire Department will 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.

**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 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, March 12th**. 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 calen-

dars 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.

**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.

**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 March!**

Charles Stickney, Bruce Larkin, Jim Martin, Jeanne Johns, Judith Bogart, Joyce Morin, Eli Schotz, Joyce Wiernasz, Alan Weisman, Thomas Dyer, Paul Sonerson, Jane Dyer, Cynthia Fournier, Charlene Madison, Lawrence Remby, David Owen, Murray Solomon, David Clark, Scott Keith, John Bye, Donna Gibson, Leslie Ferrin, Susan Mikula, Carla Ness, Rebecca Kravetz, Jane Harris-Toomey, Russell Mader, Valerie Talbot, Peter Feitner, Christine Knox, Marie Wolf, Lonelle Stevens, Earl Suriner, Mark Williams, Rory Ritz, Tracy Griffith



***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

# SAVE THE DATE!



**TechConnect Fair**  
**APRIL 6, 2024, 10 AM-3 PM**  
 New Hingham Elementary School  
 Chesterfield

Join us for a festive event offering technology support and exploration, giveaways, and more.  
 For adults 60 and older.



**TECH CONNECT**  
 SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS

A program of the Northern Hilltown's  
 Consortium of COAs

[www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org)

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!

*May your troubles  
 BE LESS AND YOUR  
 blessings be more  
 AND NOTHING BUT  
 happiness come  
 THROUGH YOUR DOOR.  
 -Irish Blessing*

## The English Language – gotta love it...

I enjoy those pieces that question why our language includes things such as spellings that are the same but the sound is different, e.g., cough, rough, though, and through. Then there are the words that just make me smile, like “kerfuffle”.

Our language changes all the time, too. We now have phishing and smishing and vishing and catfishing, and more. The AARP has a nice page with some definitions:

[www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2023/glossary-of-scam-terminology.html](http://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2023/glossary-of-scam-terminology.html)

A few highlights – phishing means they send real-looking emails to get us to click and provide information. Smishing means real-looking and sounding text messages on our phone. Vishing is a voice message, again to get us to buy something or to provide information. Catfishing is making a fake online profile, perhaps to start a romance scam or begin an online game and from that a relationship (which likely won’t end well).

Never mind the word, the idea is the same. A hacker or scammer pretends to be our bank or Medicare or the insurance company. He or she sounds real or friendly or helpful or scary, depending on how they are working their scam. They are trying to get us to willingly give up critical information so they can steal something from us, like our identity or funds in our bank account. Apparently tax season causes a rise in all these things, including fake emails – phishing! to get tax identifier numbers. If it happens to us, we can report this to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov)

Here’s to safe fishing,  
 Jean O’Neil  
 TRIAD Committee member  
[jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)

## March's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Donald Trump, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders all agree on one thing. The cost of our prescription drugs is too high. Americans pay more for their Rx than any other nation. This is not news: we know this.

The Good News is that efforts to reduce our cost are underway, starting with the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act which became effective August 16th, 2022. As of January 2023, co-pays for most insulins are now reduced to \$35/month or less. Vaccines are now zero co-pay including the shingles vaccine. Next year OOP starts. That's a cap on Out Of Pocket spending on Rx. So once you have spent \$2,000 in co-pays on your prescriptions, you will not have Rx co-pays for the remainder of the year.

The Federal government is also targeting high cost Rx. We have to wait until January 2026 to see savings on Eliquis, Xarelto, Jardiance, Farxiga, Entresto, Imbruvica and Stelara which are on the list of the first 10 Rx to be reduced. And in 2027, we'll see another list of 10 Rx to be reduced. This is because Medicare will be able to negotiate with the drug manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies will have to pay a "rebate" if they raise their prices more than the rate of inflation. This may seem like a slow process, but it's progress.

In Massachusetts, we've had out of pocket spending limits for Rx co-pays with our Prescription Advantage program since the 1990s, but this has only been available to lower income residents. The Federal OOP program does not have income/asset eligibility rules. Everyone is eligible. For more information on Rx costs, or if you have questions about generics, or other cost savings measures, you can contact the Pharmacy Outreach Program at **866-633-1617** or call your senior center to ask for an appointment with your SHINE counselor.



## Technology Help and Training for March



**Volunteers Still Needed:** to learn more about what's needed to help others with technology contact the Volunteer Coordinator at **413-296-5548**, email [coatechvolcoor@gmail.com](mailto:coatechvolcoor@gmail.com), or visit the website [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org).

### Tech Support

- Support available by email: [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com), phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within 24 hours.

### 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 3/12 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg  
*Repeats 2nd Tues of each month*
- Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Thurs 3/12 from 10:00 to Noon  
*Repeats 2nd Tues of each month*

### Tech Training:

- Beginner's Computer / Laptop Class  
Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00, for 6 weeks starting 3/7 through 4/11, or 4/18 through 5/23
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class  
Wednesdays 10:30 – Noon, for 6 weeks starting 2/21 through 3/27 or 4/3 thru 5/8

All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level.

Must register for classes or workshops no later than one week before the scheduled training date. 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)

### Event Save The Date:

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

## 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 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 \$131 (price correction) Payment to FNSC is due by March 12. Please mail them to the address above. **A few seats are 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 - is due NOW. Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **A few seats are available.**

*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 FNSC 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. Waitlist available.**

*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 October 14th. **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.**

*NEW Day Trip October 15. **Culinary Institute of America--*** Enjoy a "CIA" experience, lecture and tasting with lunch at Catarine de Medici. The \$TBD Payment to Francine Frenier is due by August TBD. Please mail a check to the address above. This trip will depart from Hadley.

*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.

## Summit to Fight Fraud: Preventing Fraud and Scams for Older Adults and Others Tuesday, March 19th at 10am

Sponsored by Investor Protection Trust, and presented with the Massachusetts Securities Division, the Pension Action Center will host a free in-person **AND live-stream event** on fraud prevention on Tuesday, March 19th. The event is free of charge, but registration is required.

Hosted in the UMass Ballroom space from 9am-3pm, with programming starting at 10am after a breakfast welcome reception, we will gather a group of experts in this field: guest speakers and panelists including several Q&A sessions. We aim to have presenters from community law enforcement, AARP MA, the Banker's Association, state officials, in addition to other stakeholders and experts in this space.

Link to Register: <http://tinyurl.com/2rkbejux> OR email your COA Coordinator/Director for the link.



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

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

**NEW Drawing Class in Goshen!**

*Thursdays, April 4 - May 23 from 1-3pm*  
Goshen Town Hall - Upstairs  
Suggested Donation of \$10 per class

This eight week, two hour drawing class is geared for beginners who would like to learn to draw, or would like to grow their skills in drawing. We tackle questions like "How do you break down what you see in order to draw it?" "How can you see the shape, line, value?" and "How can I suggest movement within my drawing?" Senior, adult and teen participants will work on these skills in an encouraging and relaxed atmosphere. Each class will begin with a warm up, and then a drawing project. The goal is to stretch our brain, try something new and to have fun together.



*Save the Date: Saturday, April 13th at 3pm*

**4D1G Gospel Quartet**

Goshen Congregational Church  
45 Main St., Goshen

Come enjoy this HymnSing and gospel music with us! Dennis Ainsworth on piano. More details to follow.

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*Save the Date: Saturday, April 27th, 9-3pm*

**Spring / Summer Clothing Exchange**

Goshen Congregational Church  
45 Main St., Goshen

Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent! More details to follow.

