

Cummington Council on Aging

April 2024 Newsletter



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

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Spring Fling Dance

Saturday, April 6th from 7-9pm
Community House

You are invited to a dance with DJ Bobby C playing songs for all ages. Light snacks and beverages will be provided. Bring your kids, grandkids and neighbors – everyone is invited! We look forward to seeing you there!
[Note: A scheduling conflict necessitated that we change the date for the dance from what we had announced in previous newsletters. We apologize for any inconvenience and hope you can join us on April 6th.]



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

Make your own Sheepy People!



Wednesday, June 19th from 1-4pm
Community House

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: a baker, a gardener and an artist. Taught by children’s book author and illustrator

Jane Dyer (who created and installed the life-size Sheepy People at the parsonage), this class is for all levels: beginners with no experience to advanced. All materials will be provided, including accessories to give your sheep its own identity. This class is open to all ages; however, it is not appropriate for young children. Cost is \$25 for Cummington residents and \$35 for non-residents. Class size is limited to 12. Registration is highly recommended to reserve your seat. Call 634-2262 or email croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov to register.

Program highlight – Potluck Luncheons

Looking to meet your neighbors and other townspeople, while enjoying a delicious meal? Throughout the year, we offer potluck luncheons at the Community House. The main part of the meal is prepared by our board members, and we ask that folks bring a side dish or dessert if they are able.



These luncheons are generally held every other month – on the third Wednesday of the month -- with varied main courses. Every year, you can count on a lunch at Thanksgiving and St. Patrick’s Day, and a summer picnic at the park. These tend to draw the largest attendance, as who can pass up delicious meals of turkey with all its traditional sides, corned beef with potatoes and cabbage and summertime chicken with cold side salads. This year, we also had our first (of what we hope to be) annual soup and chili cook-off, which was a great deal of fun.

So, if you’re looking for a chance to spend time with old friends or meet some new ones, please join us. I promise you that the food is amazing, and the company is delightful. Look for information on May’s potluck luncheon in the next newsletter.

Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources

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

Weekly Grab and Go Hot Meal– every Tuesday
The next meals will be distributed on **April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30** between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. Leave your name and phone number with the COA by **March 27th** 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
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 for additional information or with questions.

Foot Clinic
The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, May 7th** 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, April 9th**. 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 *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.

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 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 April!

William Carver, Kenneth Price, Michael Falcone, Dorset Anderson, Susan Riley, Nancy Noyes, Karen Westergaard, Hilarione O'Leary, Randall Fisher, Robert Quigley, Jeanne Mangan, Jay Brumberg, Richard LaFrancis, Joyce Dempsey, Karen Barker, Judith Slezak, Margaret Parker, Luahn Page, Betty Tessier, James Ridel, Peggy Thorn, Diane Bevan, Greta Redzko, Matthew Grallert, David Bowman, Laura Sullivan, Robert Goff



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

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.



A program of the Northern Hilltown's Consortium of COAs

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** to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!



After the Scam...

So you have been scammed. You may have lost money, a sense of security, or just pride. What do you do? Consider these options:

1. Crawl in a corner and cry "poor me, poor me" for awhile.
2. Complain to friends and family at length, accept sympathy.
3. Get ready to move on, learning how it happened and determining to never let it happen again. You might enlist one of those friend and family folks here.
4. Submit a report or complaint to the proper authorities.

I think number 1 would be very tempting, number 2 might be somewhat satisfying. But numbers 3 and 4 are the best choices!

This is a good read for the problem: <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/what-do-if-you-were-scammed>. Your first action after realizing there has been a scam is to try and limit your loss. Call the local police department to see if they can help, especially if you lost money or property or had your identity compromised. The sooner the scam is reported, the better the chance that police can recover some money. Contact your bank and credit card firms and tell them there was a fraudulent charge, freeze your credit reports, and change passwords.

Next, if you did lose money, call the National Elder Fraud Hotline at 1-833-372-8311. A case manager will help you through the reporting process and through any remaining steps to take, depending on the type of scam.

If the scam is computer-based, it is also a good idea to report this to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.IC3.gov for their tracking of cyber crimes. You can also contact the Federal Trade Commission – go to ftc.gov for a reporting form. You describe what happened, read their suggestions for next steps, and know that they will share reports with investigative agencies to help others.

After you have limited your loss, be brave and tell others to try and warn them. Post on social media, call those who you think might be vulnerable. Please know you are not the only person who has been scammed – many others have and will be, sadly.

Be brave!
 Jean O'Neil
 TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com
 413-268-2228

Technology Help and Training for April



Volunteers Still Needed: to learn more about what we need volunteers for in providing help to others with technology, contact Volunteer Coordinator: **413-296-5548**, coatechvolcoor@gmail.com, or visit www.northernhilltownscoas.org.

Tech Support

- Support available by email: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within a day.

Drop in Center Hours:

(no appointment needed)

- Weekly on Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00 at 400 Main Rd. Chesterfield Community Center
- Monthly at Meekins Library Drop-In tech support on Tuesday 4/9 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg
Repeats 2nd Tues. of each month
- Monthly Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Tuesday 4/9 from 6pm-8pm
Repeats 2nd Tues. evening of each month

Tech Training:

- Beginner's Computer / Laptop Class
Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30, restarting 4/25 for six weeks through 5/30
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class
Wednesdays 10:30 – Noon, restarting 4/24 for 6 weeks through 5/29

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

Must pre-register for classes no later than one week before the scheduled training date.

Email coaTechConnect@gmail.com; call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Event:

On **Saturday, April 6th** we will be holding a **FREE TechConnect Fair** with vendors, mini-workshops, information, walk-up tech questions answered, activities, giveaways and door prizes at New Hingham Elementary School, Smith Rd, in Chesterfield. Bring a friend!



April's Good News:

MassHealth Has Released the Medicare Savings Program Application!

By Deb Hollingworth

This Federal benefit program, administered by MassHealth, can reduce your health insurance costs by: paying your Medicare B premium which is \$174/ month this year. It also automatically gives you Extra-Help which is a program that subsidizes your Rx costs, and you get Health Safety Net coverage for hospital costs. If your income is low enough, the Medicare Savings program will, in addition, also pay co-pays for medical services like doctors visits, tests, and emergency services.

This is a great program and the financial eligibility guidelines have changed. Income can be as much as \$2,824/month if you are single and as much as \$3,833 if married. As of January 1st this year, Massachusetts became the 11th State to eliminate the assets limit for this benefit. Eligibility is determined by income alone.

The application is one page, with your signature required on the back side. Applications are now available. I don't know if you've been doing the math, but the savings on your Medicare B premium, which is now being deducted from your social security check, will be restored to your retirement benefit for a yearly savings of over \$2,088 this year. You can get an application, and description of the Medicare Savings Program and how it works, from your Senior Center. If you have questions, or need help determining if you are eligible, or help getting the application completed and submitted, you can ask for a SHINE consult.

This change has been a long time coming and you can thank Mass Senior Action which is our advocacy voice for Massachusetts Seniors.

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.

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 short wait list is available.**

Day Trip Thursday June 13. Timeless Music Pop to Broadway – Luncheon and Show at Storwton 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. **A short wait list is available.**

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. 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. **A short wait list is available.**

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.

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

This month the Senior SAFE focus is on fall prevention. Falls are the leading cause of death from unintentional injury among older adults. Here are a number of things you can do to keep from falling down:

- 1. Exercise Regularly.** It will help you build strength and improve your balance and coordination. Ask your doctor about the best things to do. Take advantage of your Council On Aging exercise group.
- 2. Take Your Time.** Get out of chairs slowly. Sit for a moment before getting out of bed. Stand up and get your balance before you walk.
- 3. Keep Stairs And Walking Areas Clear.** Remove any clutter from walking areas.
- 4. Improve Lighting In And Outside Your Home.** Use night lights or a flashlight to light the path from your bedroom to the bathroom. Turn on the lights before using the stairs.
- 5. Use Non-Slip Mats** In the bathtub and shower. Have grab bars installed next to the bathtub, shower and toilet. Wipe up spilled liquids immediately.
- 6. Avoid Uneven Surfaces.** Use only throw rugs that have built-in non-skid backing. Use non-skid pads under rugs. Smooth out wrinkles and folds in carpets. Be aware of uneven sidewalks and pavement out doors.
- 7. Stairways Should Be Well Lit.** Lighting from both the top and bottom of the stairway is important. Have easy-to-grip handrails along the full length on both sides of the stairs.
- 8. Wear Sturdy, Well Fitting Shoes.** Low-heeled shoes with non-slip soles are best. They make a fashion statement and are safer than high heels, thick-soled athletic shoes, slippers, or stocking feet.

Be SAFE and fall free!

--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.

Cummington Council on Aging
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\$5 haircuts

SMITH VOCATIONAL
COSMETOLOGY



Ready for a fresh 'do and a
new you?

Get your haircut at Smith
Vocational!

WHEN: Tuesdays & Thursdays,
call to schedule

WHERE: The Salon is located in Room 124 of
Building A at Smith Vocational High
School, 80 Locust St., Northampton.

WHAT ELSE: Manicures, colors, facials, and other
hair care options, call for other prices

HOW TO BOOK: Simply call 413-587-1414 ext. 3531 for
an appointment. All are welcome!

Drawing Class in Goshen!

Thursdays, April 4 - May 23 from 1-3pm
Goshen Town Hall - Upstairs
42 Main St. Goshen
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. Supply list provided upon registration. Register at www.lenagarcia.com

