

Cummington Council on Aging

March 2025 Newsletter



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

Coordinator: Chrisoula Roumeliotis
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Spring Bulb Show Trip

Wednesday, March 12th, leave at 9:15am

The van leaves the Community House at 9:15 and returns around 2 p.m. Transportation and admission are free; you pay for your own lunch at Spruce Corner Restaurant. Seating is limited; sign up now!

day mornings at the DAR state forest in Goshen. There are two treks per day on March 5, 12 and 19 at 10 a.m. and noon. 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 – **413-584-2052** or info@alloutadventures.org. If you have questions, contact Sarah at sarah@hilltownlandtrust.org

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Wednesday, March 19th
Community House Dining Room

11:30 – Social hour
Noon – Meal



Featuring: Corned Beef, Cabbage, Potatoes, Carrots, Onions and Irish Soda Bread

If you can, please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Following the meal, the Hilltown CDC will present a short program on the services they offer.

Scarves, neck warmers and bib/clothing protectors. We were generously gifted a supply of handmade scarves and neck warmers, as well as a large stack of home-sewn adult bib/clothing protectors. These are available for free on the resource cart. Help yourselves!

FREE BOOKS – assorted genres

We were given a variety of books to pass along. You'll find them on the resource cart. Take as many as you'd like; share with friends and neighbors!

Also offering for free: Depend and Attends brands incontinence tabbed briefs, size L. They will be stocked on the resource cart.

Housing Rehab through Hilltown CDC

The Hilltown CDC is accepting applications for the Housing Rehab Program in Cummington. The program is designed to address building and sanitary code issues for single family homes in town, via a deferred payment loan, meaning no monthly payments and no interest. Loans are forgiven over a 15 year period. Repairs can include septic/well issues, lead paint/asbestos removal, heating systems, electrical, plumbing, roofing, chimney repair, accessibility ramps, and other accessibility issues. Applications are available at the Community House or by calling Sophia at **413-296-4536** ext 112 or email at sophiad@hilltowncdc.org.

Donations:

please reach out before dropping off. Thank you to all who have donated various items to the COA. Going forward, we ask that you reach out before dropping off any items. Our storage space is limited, and we may have enough of a certain item at any given time. We appreciate your understanding.

May your troubles be less,
And your blessing be more.
And nothing but happiness,
Come through your door.

Irish Blessing



Senior Snowshoeing – March 5, 12 & 19

Hilltown Land Trust and All Out Adventures are offering a series of snowshoe treks on Wednes-

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. Unless otherwise indicated, these programs take place in the dining room area of the Community House.

Weekly Grab and Go Hot Meal– every Tuesday
Leave your name and phone number with the COA to reserve your meal. Suggested donation of \$4 per meal goes to HVES. **Interested in getting a meal, but can't pick it up? Let us know.**

Healthy Bones and Balance– 4 TIMES A WEEK! Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.; Tuesdays from 3 to 4 pm.

Coffee Hour
Mondays and Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Needlework Group
Thursdays, 1-4pm.

Sand deliveries
Please let us know if you need a 5-gallon bucket of sand.

Drop in Tech support
Second Wednesday of every month, 10 a.m. to noon. For more information, contact TechConnect at 413-296-5080.

Shine counselor
Caroline Solan can be reached at 413-586-2000 or csolan@lifepathma.org

Foot Clinic
The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, March 4th** with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$40 for Cummington residents and \$50 for non-residents.

Living Fully, Aging Gracefully

The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tuesday, March 11th**. For more information on this program, contact annieb@crocker.com or fandellaf@gmail.com or call Lucy at 634-5576.

Resource Cart: next to the COA office – everything on the cart is **FREE** and available whenever the Community House is open. Stocked with covid test kits, the 2025 Consumer Calendar, medical/surgical masks, incontinence briefs, 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 and much more.

Medical Equipment

Walkers, crutches, shower seats and tub transfer seats, toilet seat risers, and more are available for your use.

Easy Ride Van and Driver Pool Program

Contact Ed Pelletier at 296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

Happy Birthday in March!

Bruce Larkin, Jim Martin, Jeanne Johns, Judith Bogart, Joyce Morin, Marty 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, Brendon Connors, 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, William McLaughlin, 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!



PLEASE do your Power of Attorney now!

For more information, please revisit page 5 of the June 2022 newsletter:

<https://northernhilltownscoas.org/files>

For financial safety,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com, 413-268-2228

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

This month our focus is what to do and not to do treating burns and scalds.



1. First of all, remove the patient from the source of the burn.
2. Call 911 if the burn is deep and/or covering a large area.
3. Run COOL (not cold) water over the burn. This will cool down and stop the boiling fluid under the skin.
4. Do NOT put butter, grease or ointment on the burn.
5. Flush a chemical burn continuously with cool water.
6. Remove watches and jewelry from the burn area.
7. If possible, remove clothing from the burn area.
8. If clothing is stuck to the burn, leave it in place and cut away the clothing around the burn.
9. Again, do not hesitate to call 911 and seek medical attention for serious, deep, large area burn treatment.

Have a burn-free and sweet sugar season!

--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.



Please join us!

"Sharing Stories, Creating Change" Hilltown Exhibit Opening & Community Gathering

The Hampshire County Community Story Archive presents a collection of food stories sharing community wisdom for a better future.

Saturday, March 8th

1:30 to 3:30pm

Join in conversation with storytellers at 2pm

Meekins Library, Community Room
2 Williams Street, Williamsburg

Free & open to the public.
Refreshments will be served!

Visit hcfpc.collaborative.org to learn more

Funded by Mass in Motion, an initiative of MA Dept. of Public Health & Williamsburg Cultural Council, a local agency supported by MA Cultural Council.



Tech. Help and Training for March



GREAT NEWS!

TechConnect will continue providing services. Although we have fewer trainings going forward, drop-ins and tech support will continue. Please take advantage of ongoing service.

DELIVERING NOW AND ACCEPTING NEW REQUESTS: Internet Hotspots

It's not too late if you need affordable internet access! We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access the internet, and they work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us by phone or email. Calls to **413-296-5080** are now returned and emailing **coatechconnect@gmail.com** is also a great way to reach us.

Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment: **coaTechHelp@gmail.com**, phone or text msg **413-296-5080** or check the website, **www.northernhilltownscoas.org**, for locations and time. You can attend drop-in at all locations, except Nash Hill.

Devices for you: PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads and Android tablets

There is still time to join the Digital World. We have more PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks and iPad and Android tablets. If you need or are waiting for a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device, please contact us. Email **coatechconnect@gmail.com**, leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online request form on our website, **www.northernhilltownscoas.org**

Drop in Centers: All are Welcome at Any Location! *(no appointment needed)*

- Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00
Two Fridays, 11:30-1:30 (3/7 and 3/21)
- Cumington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (3/12)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12pm-2pm (3/20)

- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (3/20)
- Westhampton Library, 1 North Rd. Drop-in tech support, 4th Thurs. 2-4pm (3/27)
- Williamsburg
Meekins Library Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 3/11 from 10 to Noon
Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 3/11 from 10 to Noon
- Worthington: drop-in tech support at COA office. Call COA for date & time: 413-238-5962.

Tech Training:

MUST pre-register for training no later than two days before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level. To register, email **coaTechTrainer@gmail.com**, call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website **www.northernhilltownscoas.org**

Tech Workshops, March through August:

*On Fridays twice a month from 10:30–11:30 at
Chesterfield Community Center*

- 3/7 - Computer Maintenance
- 3/21 - Misinformation
- 4/4 - Social Media
- 4/18 - Cloud Basics
- 5/2 - Intro to Google Suite
- 5/16- Microsoft Word
- 6/6 - Microsoft Excel
- 6/20 - Canva
- 7/18 - Windows Basics
- 8/1 - Google Drive

Computer Classes:

No ongoing computer classes are scheduled. An alternate online resource for basic training can be accessed, with help from us, at **www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/login/?location=17640-MG8N-techconnect**

We can set up your access to this website and help you begin to train yourself for very basic to more advanced beginner digital literacy.



On the Road Again...

2025 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 6. One day at **Encore Casino in Everett, MA.** Free Slot play. Lunch on your own. Restaurants on site. Cost \$40. I need 15 to sign up to make this trip affordable. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to the address above by March 6.

Day Trip May 19. **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum & Maggiano's Little Italy.** Enjoy a delicious family-style lunch at Maggiano's. Tour three floors of galleries at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on your own. Price \$144. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by March 24. **Waitlist only.**

Day Trip June 8. **Winnepesaukee Railroad.** Enjoy a complete turkey dinner, prepared by Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant, aboard the train while touring the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. Price \$137. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by April 8. **Waitlist only.**

Multi Day Trip June 22-26. **Montreal & Ottawa.** Passports required. Visit the Biodome, Notre Dame Basilica, Montreal's Underground City, Parliament Hill, Cruise on the St. Lawrence River. Price \$1,052. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by March 26. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **A few seats remain.**

Day Trip July 16. **FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise.** Take a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy a boxed lunch on board. Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the first Presidential Library. Price \$140. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by May 28.

Day Trip August 3. Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies Lehigh Valley IronPigs** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ballpark-fare buffet are included. Cost \$90.00. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by June 1.

Day Trip Sept. TBD. **The BIG E,** an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage.

Day Trip Oct. 9. **A Chorus Line.** Center orchestra seating for the 50th Anniversary Production on stage at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Center Orchestra seating. Lunch at The Gelston House. Price \$177. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by August 1. **Note date change.**

Multi Day Trip October 12-18. **Biltmore Estate & Smoky Mountains, Asheville, NC.** Seven days, six nights. Visit the Biltmore Estate, the St. Lawrence Basilica, historic Gatlinburg, TN & Asheville, NC. Guided tour of the Smoky Mountains National Park. Price \$1,099. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by July 18. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **As of March 2025, Diamond Tours**

is expecting this trip to go, despite the hurricane damage around the area. Please stay tuned.

Day Trip Nov-Dec. **A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA.** Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza--100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at The Chateau Restaurant. Price TBD. Sundays.

Good News for March 2025

Being a caregiver is usually not something you imagine, or plan for. It just happens. It could be your parents needing help, or your child becomes disabled, or your life partner's medical problems become debilitating. Your caregiver responsibilities can happen in an instant due to accident and/or injury. Or they can grow slowly, when the person you are helping begins needing more and more support. It can become overwhelming, and isolating where you focus on what needs to be done day by day.

How do you manage? What help is available?

We usually look to our health insurance because caregiver tasks include helping with personal care, meals, cleaning, grocery shopping, managing Rx, and keeping track of doctor appointments. For those of us over 65 who have Medicare as our primary health insurance, we are surprised and disappointed to discover that Medicare doesn't cover home care services or nursing home costs except for short periods of rehab, or after a hospitalization when your doctor can write orders for the VNA to deliver limited home care help.

In Massachusetts, we also have the State Home Care program which can provide ongoing home care services for residents over 60. These services include help with meals, housekeeping, personal care, transportation to medical appointments, lifeline services and a program called Options counseling to help understand other resources. Unfortunately, availability of workers for home care is limited, especially here in the hill towns. Highland Valley is the agency who oversees and pays for these home care services. Often authorized hours go unfilled because there aren't available workers.

So while Medicare and Highland Valley may pay for some home care, when our caregiver needs are greater, MassHealth is the resource that can help caregivers pay for the help they need.

MassHealth is medical insurance for those with limited financial resources. However, MassHealth has different income and asset eligibility limits for different programs. For caregivers, there are a couple of programs that help.

The PCA (Personal Care Attendant) program lets you hire your own worker, and Mass Health pays for a number of hours determined by a nursing assessment. So those who have significant medical problems, would qualify for more hours than those with less need. The worker you hire can be anyone (*cont. on next pg*)

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(cont. from previous pg) who is not married to the MassHealth member. The PCA program has higher income eligibility limits, and “excess” assets can be transferred before applying. This program pays for care at home, not nursing home. MassHealth also pays for the Adult Family Care Program, like the foster care system, a caregiver can be paid for managing the Mass Health member’s care at home. AFC pays the caregiver a tax free stipend for managing and coordinating services. The program also provides a RN and social worker to help the caregiver access other resources and services.

To enroll in either of these programs, the person needing help must be eligible for Mass Health.

You might contact your senior center or SHINE counselor to ask about Mass Health eligibility. Don’t assume you’re not eligible- it’s worth a conversation to explore the options.



Spring/ Summer Clothing Exchange

Saturday, April 26th, 9am-3pm

Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St. Goshen



Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent! Drop off your washed, gently-used men’s, women’s and children’s spring/summer clothing and accessories at the church on Wednesday 4/23 from 6-8pm or Friday 4/25 from 9am-3pm (you can also call Laura at 268-7005 to arrange a different time), then come back to shop on Sat. the 26th from 9am-3pm! All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not.