

# Cummington Council on Aging

## July 2025 Newsletter



**Cummington Council on Aging**  
**PO Box 95, 33 Main St.**  
**Cummington, MA 01026**

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### Summer Greetings!

Hello! We hope your summer is going well. We are planning some late summer/early fall events (one likely involves ice cream!) and will share details in the August newsletter. The dates of some local summer fairs are below, in case you'd like to add those to your summer plans. In the meantime, look at our ongoing programs, activities, and resources listed below; perhaps there's something you've been meaning to try or reach out about.



We want to give you a few updates on what's happening behind the scenes here at the COA.

**Newsletter:** We have worked hard over the last few years to keep this newsletter going while dealing with funding challenges. Last year, we stopped mailing it to everyone and transitioned to our current model of *mailing it to those over 80, emailing a PDF copy to everyone able and willing to access it that way, and leaving paper copies around town.* We think this is working well; if you have any concerns about this or are not receiving the newsletter, please touch base so that we can figure out the best way to get it to you. We are now making another change. Sadly, we no longer have funding to pay our newsletter designer. Starting with the August issue, we will be designing our own newsletter, with the assistance of volunteers. The newsletter may look a little different, but it will continue to be filled with informative content, and you will continue to receive it in the same manner that you have been receiving it. We don't anticipate any problems in this transition, but if there are any, we apologize in advance.

**COA Advisory Board:** We continue to seek board members and hope that you will consider whether this is something that you are able to do. Please contact us with any questions or join us at a meeting (the first Thursday of the month at 10:30) to see what it's all about.

**Volunteers:** We also seek volunteers for assorted projects. If you are interested in volunteering, please let us know.

### Summer Fairs

Heath Fair ~	Aug. 15-17
Cummington Fair ~	Aug. 21-24
3 County Fair ~	Aug. 29-Sept. 1
Franklin County Fair ~	Sept. 4-7
Big E ~	Sept. 12-28



### Five Gallon Sand Buckets

If the bucket of sand you received from the Fire Dept. is empty, please return it to the Community House – go INTO the side entrance and look for the sign to your right. Also, we will collect any clean and empty 5-gallon buckets (preferably with covers) and large kitty litter buckets for future sand deliveries.

### Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources

*For more information on any of these programs, activities and resources, contact the COA at [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto: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.

**Healthy Bones and Balance–** Mondays, and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

#### **Coffee Hour**

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

#### **Needlework Group**

Thursdays, 1-4pm.

### Resource cart

Everything on the cart is free; available whenever the Community House is open

### Exercise Equipment

Pedal exercisers and sets of hand weights (1, 3 and 5 pounds) are available for you to borrow.

### Drop in Tech support

**Second Wednesday of every month, 10 a.m. to noon.** For more information, contact TechConnect at **413-296-5080**. No appointment needed.

### Shine counselor

#### (Medicare related insurance issues)

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

### MassHealth/Medicaid

Buliah Mae Thomas at the Hilltown Community Health Center: **bthomas@hchcweb.org** or **413-238-5511**.

### Connector program

#### (services beyond health insurance)

Jennifer O'Connell at **413-296-4536 ext. 110** or **communityconnectjo@gmail.com**

### Foot Clinic

The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, July 1st** 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, July 8th**. For more information on this program, contact **annieb@crocker.com** or **fandellaf@gmail.com** or call Lucy at **634-5576**.

### 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; please reach out if you have something to donate.

### Easy Ride Van & Driver Pool

The Hilltown Easy Ride van and the Driver Pool program provide rides for medical appointments, medical errands and shopping to Northampton and Pittsfield. Contact Ed Pelletier of the Hilltown CDC Transportation program at **296-4232** for more information and to arrange a ride.

## Happy Birthday in July!

Patricia Lorda, Ruth Dexheimer, Allan Douglas, Richard Wolf, Worth Noyes, Shelley Rieman, Russell Clark, Richard Gooding, Jean Schreier, Thomas Jay, Janice Loux, Sandra Shapiro, Margaret Allard, Gerald Howes, Joseph Pagano, Richard Fournier, Kristin Jay, Delia Nash, William Hoehne, William Dynok, Heather Allan, Edward Stempniewicz, Michael Holden, James Wettereau, Dennis Carr, John Dudek, Althea Frary, Laura Wetzler, Christopher Mesmer, Steven Schiff, Shaun Hebert, Mark Yamilkoski, Roger Huebner, Bryna Greenspan, Laurel Greenberg, Pamela McLean, Wayne Higgins, James Toomey, Martin Pixley, Deborah Jordan, John Taylor, John Burns, Hannah Abdelhalim, Christine Reeves, Linda Leigh, Yuri Khibkin, Stephanie Bean, Kathleen Whelihan



### ***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 make out your check to Cummington Council of Aging and mail to Cummington COA, PO Box 95 Cummington, MA 01026.)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



### Power of Attorney, yet again

Since I last nagged you on getting a POA, I have learned some things. One of them the hard way, but that is to your benefit. Oh, and the person who gives the POA to another person is called the “principal”; the person who receives the authority is the “agent” or the “attorney-in-fact”.

1. Before the agent can use the POA for the principal, the principal should notify any third parties, such as banks, that the agent is authorized to act on the principal's behalf. This means that the agent should go to or communicate with the bank or rest home or whatever entity, to insure they can accept the POA and add it to their files. The agent should take a copy of the appointment and proof of identity.

2. Some entities such as a financial institution may need a certified copy of a POA. The attorney who prepared the POA – or any notary public – can prepare a certified copy from an original POA document. This verifies that the POA is still valid.

3. The wording should be explicit as to privileges given to the agent. My best example of that is making sure that complete electronic access to accounts is available. I bank online, many of you do, and the principal may want the agent to be able to continue that.

4. To change the mailing address of the principal for Medicare and Social Security (SS), the agent will need to go through SS, and whether this can be done online or via phone or if a visit is required is fluid these days. In my case, I called SS to set up an appointment to visit and learned that the federal government does not recognize a POA. SS requires that the agent register as a Representative Payee. The paperwork includes a form “Request to be Selected as Payee” and likely a form for a medical provider to certify that the principal cannot or does not want to manage their finances.

5. MassHealth requires the agent to register as an Authorized Representative before the principal's address can be changed, or before MassHealth will share information about an insurance issue. That registration form can be found online: [www.mass.gov/doc/authorized-representative-designation-form-1/download](http://www.mass.gov/doc/authorized-representative-designation-form-1/download)

6. The principal should keep a list of who they have informed about their POA, in case they later need to revoke it.

Smile!

Jean O'Neil

TRIAD Committee member

[jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)

413-268-2228



### Seniors Aware of Fire Education

This Senior S.A.F.E. column is different from the many that have been published over the years. I am going to give you only one piece of fire and life safety advice, which is:

Senior   
**SAFE**

~ if you are in a structure that is on fire or in one when a carbon monoxide detector sounds,  
**GET OUT and STAY OUT!**

This is the last COA newsletter put together by Kristen Estelle. She has edited, formatted and produced the printed and online editions of the newsletters that go to every senior in seven Northern Hilltowns. She has brought local and regional news for everyone's benefit. This newsletter was the first of its kind when it was recognized by the Department of Fire Services a number of years ago at an annual S.A.F.E educators conference.

I personally thank Kristen for editing and formatting my column. It catches the eye and is an easy read. I also thank her for the “gentle reminder” of the deadline each month.

Job well done!

--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.*



## Tech. Help and Training for July



### GREAT NEWS!

TechConnect will continue providing services through a partnership with Northampton Open Media. 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. Call **413-296-5080** or email [coatechdevices@gmail.com](mailto:coatechdevices@gmail.com).

### Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment: [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com), phone or text msg **413-296-5080** or check the website, [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://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 while supplies last. We have ordered more PC laptops/ computers, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads 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 [coatechdevices@gmail.com](mailto:coatechdevices@gmail.com), leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online request form on our website, [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://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 One Friday, 11:30-1:30 (7/18)
- Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (7/9)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12pm-2pm (7/17)

- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (7/17)
- Westhampton Library, 1 North Rd. Drop-in tech support, 4th Thurs. 2-4pm (7/24)
- Williamsburg Meekins Library Drop-In tech support 2nd Tuesday 7/8 from 10:30-12:30 Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support 2nd Tuesday 7/8 from 10 to Noon

### Tech Training Classes & Workshops:

MUST pre-register for training no later than one week before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level. To register, email [coaTechTrainer@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechTrainer@gmail.com), call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org)

### Tech Workshops, July and August:

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

- 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](http://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 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 **NOW. Call or email above to be added to the Wait List.**

*Day Trip August 3.* Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ball-park-fare buffet are included. Cost \$90.00 due **NOW.** Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above. **Call or email above to be added to the Wait List.**

*Day Trip Sept. 15. The BIG E,* an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage. The Stylistics perform hits from the 70's. Cost \$18 for Northampton Seniors, all other seniors \$20. Make your check payable to Barbara Kaczinski & send to 39 Leeno Terr. Florence, MA 01062 by Sept. 1. NO REFUNDS due to bargain price. Bus leaves from Sheldon Field. **NOTE: check info and mailing address.**

**NEW Day Trip Tues. October 8. Historic Salem Cross Inn.** Includes luncheon, choices available. Tour of Quabbin and stop at Brookfield Orchards. Discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$103 for other seniors. Call Phyllis 413-238-5962 or coa@worthington-ma.us for details and to reserve a seat by Sept 1. Limited seating.

*Day Trip Oct. 9. A Chorus Line.* Center orchestra seating for the 50th Anniversary Production 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. **Call or email above to be added to the Wait List.**

*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. **A 2nd bus has 10 open seats.**

*Day Trip Sunday, December 7. 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 \$160 (approx.) Make a check payable to Landmark Tours, mail to address above by Oct. 13.

## Good News for July 2025

By Deb Hollingworth

Let's talk a little more about resources for caregivers. Are you a caregiver? Nurses, physical therapists, and other medical professionals certainly are, but you are too if someone depends on you to help them in order to stay home safely.

Maybe you do grocery shopping, or provide rides to medical appointments? But what if you are taking care of someone 24/7, providing personal care, meals, setting up medications, doing laundry and a host of other tasks to make sure the house is run.

Being a caregiver, managing the household, can become a full time job.

What happens if you need care yourself? Who can take over while you get the care you need for a medical procedure, recovery from surgery, or just to recoup your strength? This kind of help is called Respite care. It might be help like someone coming into your home, or it might be a short term nursing home placement for the person you're taking care of.

These short term nursing home placements can be paid for by MassHealth if the person you are caring for qualifies for MassHealth, or in some cases, the VA will pay for short term placement if the person you care for is a veteran and receives medical services from the VA system.



To find out more about the Caregiver Options, you can contact Highland Valley Elder Services at **586-2000** and ask to speak to an Options counselor. Highland Valley also has had Caregiver grants to help with additional expenses when the caregiver needs Respite services support. (Federally funded grants through Highland Valley are subject to availability). And always give your senior center a call to see who to speak to about MassHealth and Veterans services eligibility.

**Cummington Council on Aging**  
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**Cummington, MA 01026**

**Cummington  
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# SCAM ALERT!



*You get a call or message  
saying that you did not appear  
for **jury duty**, you need to pay  
a fine or you will be arrested.*

***What should you do?***

- Hang up! It's a scam.
- No one will call if you miss jury duty.
- The sheriff's department will **never** call and ask you to pay a fine.

***VERIFY THE  
INFORMATION***

**Massachusetts  
Office of the Jury  
Commissioner**

(800) 843-5879

*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  
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