

# Cummington Council on Aging



**SPRING IS HERE**  
FRIDAY, MARCH 20



*Daylight Saving Time begins  
Sunday, March 8  
~turn clocks forward 1 hour ~*

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**WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE COA IN MARCH? IN ADDITION TO THE REGULAR, RECURRING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES, WE WILL BE OFFERING:**

- a decluttering workshop on March 17
- a Health Talk on March 24
- a St. Patrick's Day Lunch on March 25  
*(more information on the following pages)*

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**ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCH**  
**Wednesday, March 25th**  
**11:30: social time**  
**noon: lunch**

Join us on Wednesday, March 25th for our annual St. Patrick's Day lunch. We will be serving corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots and Irish soda bread. Please bring a dessert to share, if you are able.

*Singer & Storyteller Davis Bates will perform "A Celtic Celebration"*

33 Main Street  
P.O. Box 95  
Cummington, MA 01026  
413-634-2262, option 8  
[croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov)

<https://www.cummington-ma.gov>  
<https://northernhilltownscoas.org>

Coordinator  
Chrisoula Roumeliotis

Board of Directors  
Worth Noyes, Chair  
Ann Eisenhower, Recording Secretary  
JoDee Simard, Treasurer  
Gail Roberge  
Brenda Emerson-Camp  
Fionnghuala Reagan  
Associate member: June Lynds

**Make sure you are receiving this newsletter every month!**

- by email
- by picking it up at the post office, Hillside Terrace, Community House or the library
- by mail (if you are 80 and over)
- on the town or consortium website

**If you would like it emailed or mailed to you, please let us know!**

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**SAVE THE DATES IN APRIL**

Bingo – Wednesday, April 15, 2-4  
Health Talk – Tuesday, April 21, 9-11  
Resource, Volunteer & Job Fair – Saturday, April 25, 10-2



**SENSIBLE SORT**  
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

**LEARN TO ORGANIZE & DECLUTTER  
YOUR HOME**

**Tuesday, March 17, 10 - 11:30 a.m.**

Join Kira from Sensible Sort and learn to take control of your environment for the next generation. Compassionate help from a professional organizer for a variety of overwhelming tasks. Bring your questions! *Light refreshments will be served.*

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**PUBLIC HEALTH PRESENTATIONS**

Public Health Nurses from the Northampton Dept. of Health and Human Services will be joining us for a series of important **health talks**, starting with *Healthy Minds, Healthy Aging: Mental Health for Older Adults*, on **Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 a.m.** There will be a short presentation, plenty of time for questions, and blood pressure readings. *Refreshments will be served.*

**Upcoming presentations:**

- April 21: Health Advocacy & Healthcare Proxies
- May 19: Step Safely: Caring for Your Feet to Prevent Falls
- June 16: Health Impact of Heat on Older Adults

**COMPUTER WORKSHOPS IN  
CHESTERFIELD**

TechConnect will resume computer workshops with our partner TechHub. Workshops run from 10:30-11:30 a.m. All classes will be held at 400 Main St., Chesterfield, downstairs. Call 413-296-5080 and leave a message to register.

- March 6 - Zoom Basics**
- March 20 - Social Media Basics**
- April 3 - Online Safety Basics**
- April 17 - Avoiding Misinformation**
- May 1 - Cloud Basics**
- May 15 - MS Excel**
- May 29 - Windows Operating System Basics**
- June 5 - Designing with Canva**

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**RESOURCE, VOLUNTEER & JOB FAIR**

**Saturday, April 25, 10-2**  
**New Hingham Elementary School,**  
**30 Smith Road, Chesterfield**

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium is sponsoring a Hilltown Resource, Volunteer & Job Fair, an event designed to connect community members to available resources, and to meaningful work and volunteer opportunities that directly support older adults across our Hilltowns. Please see the second page of the regional portion of this newsletter for more information.

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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 on Aging and mail to  
Cummington COA, PO Box 95 Cummington, MA 01026.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

| Monday                                                               | Tuesday                                                                                                  | Wednesday                                                                           | Thursday                                                                              | Friday                                                                        | Sat/Sun          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>2<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour</p>  | <p>3<br/>9 Foot care<br/>12 Grab &amp; Go<br/>3:45 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance</p>                       | <p>4</p>                                                                            | <p>5<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour<br/>1 Needlework</p>  | <p>6<br/>10:30 Computer workshop - Zoom Basics (in Chesterfield)</p>          | <p>1<br/>7/8</p> |
| <p>9<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour</p>  | <p>10<br/>12 Grab &amp; Go<br/>1 Living Fully<br/>3:45 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance</p>                   | <p>11</p>                                                                           | <p>12<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour<br/>1 Needlework</p> | <p>13</p>                                                                     | <p>14/15</p>     |
| <p>16<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour</p> | <p>17<br/>10 <b>Sensible Sort workshop</b><br/>12 Grab &amp; Go<br/>3:45 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance</p> | <p>18</p>                                                                           | <p>19<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour<br/>1 Needlework</p> | <p>20<br/>10:30 Computer workshop - Social Media Basics (in Chesterfield)</p> | <p>21/22</p>     |
| <p>23<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour</p> | <p>24<br/>9 <b>Health Talk</b><br/>12 Grab &amp; Go<br/>3:45 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance</p>             | <p>25<br/><b>ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCH</b><br/>11:30: social time<br/>Noon: lunch</p> | <p>26<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour<br/>1 Needlework</p> | <p>27</p>                                                                     | <p>28/29</p>     |
| <p>30<br/>9:30 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance<br/>10:30 coffee hour</p> | <p>31<br/>12 Grab &amp; Go<br/>3:45 Healthy Bones &amp; Balance</p>                                      |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                               |                  |

More information on these events or activities can be found throughout the newsletter.

**ONGOING PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND 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, option 8. Unless otherwise indicated, these programs take place in the dining room of the Community House.

### **Grab and Go 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.; Tuesdays from 3:45-4:45 p.m.

### **Coffee hour**

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

### **Needlework group**

Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m.

### **Resource cart**

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

### **Foot care clinic**

The next foot care clinic will be on Tuesday, March 3 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.

### **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.

### **Exercise Equipment**

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

### **Sand deliveries**

Contact COA if you need a bucket of sand for your icy walkways.

### **Living Fully, Aging Gracefully**

The next Zoom meeting for this group is Tuesday, March 10. For more information, contact [annieb@crocker.com](mailto:annieb@crocker.com) or [fandellaf@gmail.com](mailto:fandellaf@gmail.com) or call Lucy at 634-5576.

### **Drop in Tech support (no appointment needed)**

Chesterfield Community Center, every Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, contact TechConnect at 413-296-5080.

### **In-home Tech Support (by appointment)**

Call or text 413-296-5080 or email [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com) to arrange a home visit.

### **Shine counselor (Medicare related insurance issues)**

Caroline Solan at 413-586-2000 or [csolan@lifepathma.org](mailto:csolan@lifepathma.org)

### **MassHealth/Medicaid**

Buliah Mae Thomas at the Hilltown Community Health Center at 413-238-5511 or [bthomas@hchcweb.org](mailto:bthomas@hchcweb.org).

### **Community Connector program (services beyond health insurance)**

Jennifer O'Connell at 413-296-4536 ext. 110 or [communityconnectjo@gmail.com](mailto:communityconnectjo@gmail.com) -services include assistance with obtaining benefits, such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security; helping you live independently in your home; assistance with home repairs and transportation; and more.

### **Happy Birthday in March**

Jim Martin, Jeanne Johns, Judith Bogart, Joyce Morin, Marty Schotz, Joyce Wiernasz, Alan Weisman, Thomas Dyer, Paul Sonerson, Jane Dyer, Cynthia Fournier, Lawrence Remby, David Owen, Murray Solomon, David Clark, Scott Keith, Brendon Connors, John Bye, Leslie Ferrin, Susan Mikula, Carla Ness, Rebecca Kravetz, Jane Harris-Toomey, Russell Mader, Valerie Talbot, Peter Feitner, Christine Knox, Lonelle Stevens, Earl Suriner, Mark Williams, William McLaughlin, Rory Ritz, Tracy Griffith, Daniel Nicewicz, Michael Bourdon



# Regional News

## SENIORS AWARE OF FIRE EDUCATION

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

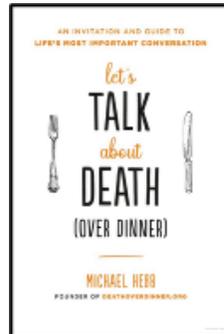


1. First, remove patient from the source of the burn.
2. Call 911 if the burn is deep and/or covering a large area.
3. Run COOL (not cold) water over the burn. This will cool down and stop any boiling fluid under the skin.
4. Do NOT put butter, grease or ointment on the burn. Flush chemical burns continuously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



**A discussion series around the book "Let's Talk about Death over Dinner," by Michael Hebb, will be offered at the Cummington Community House in April and May.**

"Given the right framing, a "difficult" conversation does not need to be difficult. It can be liberating. It can even be transformative," Michael Hebb.

Death Doula Stacey Mackowiak will lead us through a "guided conversation that transforms a seemingly difficult conversation into one of deep engagement, insight, and empowerment."

**Michael's book will be provided at an introductory session on Thursday April 16th from 4-5pm. On Thursdays May 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> dinners will be held from 4:30-6:30pm to share our thoughts on questions posed in the book.**

**Participation is limited to 15 individuals. Please RSVP with Polly at [pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us](mailto:pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us) or call 413-212-1581.**

All individuals in the 7 COA Consortium Hilltowns are welcome to participate. (Williamsburg, Goshen, Cummington, Plainfield, Worthington, Chesterfield, and Westhampton).

**This is an event funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Council on Aging**



Massachusetts Councils On Aging

# **HILLTOWN RESOURCE AND VOLUNTEER/JOB FAIR**

## ***ROOTED IN THE HILLTOWNS. GUIDED BY CARE.***

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium is proud to sponsor the upcoming Hilltown Resource, Volunteer & Job Fair, an event designed to connect community members to available resources, and to meaningful work and volunteer opportunities that directly support adults across our Hilltowns and western Massachusetts.

Whether you are a senior seeking assistance, a caregiver looking for guidance, or someone hoping to give back, there will be valuable information available. This fair will highlight a wide range of resources available to seniors and their families. Attendees can learn more about services including Veteran Affairs benefits, in-home support, help with housekeeping and daily tasks, transportation assistance, nutrition programs, and other community-based supports designed to make daily life safer and more manageable for older adults.

In addition to providing information about resources available to Hilltown seniors and their families, this fair will bring together local organizations and service providers who are actively seeking compassionate, dependable employees and volunteers. Opportunities range from caregiving, transportation, and nutrition services to outreach, social support, and community engagement. These roles play a vital part in helping seniors remain safe, connected, and able to age with dignity in their own homes. The need is real—and the impact of showing up is profound.

At the Council on Aging, we believe every older adult deserves access to support, respect, and compassionate care. By empowering you with information about what resources are available, we aim to increase your independence. By strengthening community partnerships and empowering people to share their time and talents, we reinforce the networks that serve our elders and enrich the fabric of our small towns. Please join us!

### **Event Details**

 **Saturday, April 25, 2026**

 **10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

 **New Hingham Regional Elementary School, Chesterfield, MA**

*All community members are encouraged to attend. Come explore opportunities, connect with local organizations, and help strengthen the care and compassion that define our Hilltowns.*

## On the Road Again..

### TRIPS IN 2026



**Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat  
BEFORE mailing payments.**

For more info call **413-296-4291**

Email: [francine.frenier@gmail.com](mailto:francine.frenier@gmail.com)

**Mail: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096**

#### **Multi-Day Trip April 17-21 Washington DC 5**

days, 4 nights Admission to the George Washington Mount Vernon Estate, Garden & Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Smithsonian Institution, Capitol Building, World War II Memorial and more. Price \$790 and is due NOW. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. A few seats are still available.

#### **Day Trip May 3, 2026, Sunday A Grand Night for Singing**

at the Seven Angels Theater in Waterbury, CT. Pre-show lunch at San Marino's Restaurant. Price \$132. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above NOW.

#### **Day Trip June 11th, Million Dollar Quartet play.**

New London Barn Playhouse presents a jukebox musical that dramatizes a real and remarkable moment in music history. Four future legends, Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis happened to gather in the same studio. Includes a buffet luncheon at Colby-Sawyer College. Price \$177. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by April 6, 2026.

#### **Day Trip June 23rd, Portsmouth Harbor Cruise and Fosters' Lobster/Clambake.**

Before the Portsmouth Harbor cruise, enjoy lunch at Fosters in York Maine offering a choice of **lobster or BBQ chicken or vegetarian option.** Price \$160. Make a payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by April 16, 2026. (replaces the Isles of Shoals trip)

#### **Day Trip July 1st, FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise.**

Take a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy a boxed lunch of gourmet sandwiches on board. Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt & the first Presidential Library. Price \$140. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail it to the address above by May 6, 2026. Wait list only.

#### **Day Trip July 12, 13, 14 or 15 Tall Ships in Boston**

Contact The Travel Group 1-888-320-8687 for more info.

#### **Day Trip August 3rd Encore Casino.**

\$50 Cost Includes: round trip bus transportation, driver gratuity & \$20 in free slot play. Meals on your own. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by June 6, 2026. 35 passengers are needed for this trip to go.

#### **Day Trip September TBD Big E.**

#### **Day Trip Nov/Dec, TBD Holiday trip**

## STATE CIRCUIT BREAKER TAX CREDIT

**Receive up to \$2820** with the Circuit Breaker Tax Credit refund!

Are you: A Massachusetts resident that was 65 or older before 12/31/25

Do you have a yearly income:

Under \$75k for single person, not head of household

Under \$94k for head of household

Under \$112k for married couples filing joint return

If you meet these guidelines, please call or email Jennifer O'Connell, the Community Connector, for assistance. 413-296-4536 ext 110, or email [communityconnectjo@gmail.com](mailto:communityconnectjo@gmail.com) You can receive up to three prior years worth of tax credit refunds This tax credit also applies to individuals who do not owe taxes but you do have to file a state tax return to get it.

## GOOD NEWS FOR MARCH 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

**Yipe!** This is the time of year when I sometimes hear from folks that the health care plan changes they made last Fall during Open Enrollment....are not working out.

**Usually this happens** when they go to pick up a prescription and discover that this year's co-pay is significantly more than they had to pay last year. Or, if they had a United Health Care (AARP) plan and didn't change it, they might be told that their medical provider can't bill their United plan any more.

### **WHY are all these changes happening?**

Because they can. And health insurers are always trying to improve their bottom line ... and they are allowed to charge more for Rx co-pays, drop medical providers from their network and increase co-pays for medical services if it improves their profit margins.

The **Good News** is that if you are currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan.... you are allowed to switch to another Advantage plan or opt out altogether and return to original Medicare and enroll in a Medicare D plan for Rx coverage. You have until March 31st to make any changes. After that, you are locked into your plan's coverage until January next year.

You can ignore all this if you have an Advantage plan that is through your retirement/pension. It is usually unwise to opt out of health coverage provided through your pension....because if you do make a change, you will not be able to get that pension benefit back.

**Best strategy** is to check with a SHINE counselor to see if you can make changes, and see if there are better options.

Our SHINE counselor for the hill towns is **Caroline Solan** at Highland Valley 413-586-2000 or you can call the Regional SHINE office at Lifepath in Greenfield, 413-773-5555.



## An UPDATE on YOUR Tech Services

**TECH CONNECT 2.0** has continued operating on funds from the original Tech Connect program since March of 2025. With the support of Northampton Open Media, the Alliance for Digital Equity, our COA directors, volunteers and librarians, we have supported over 350 technology calls from older adults in the hilltowns. We grow more popular as word of mouth spreads that we are a source of refurbished devices, free tech support and training.

We are exploring state and community grants. It has been rough going in the current funding climate. We are funded through the spring / early summer but then must rely on ourselves and the community to support the service if we are to continue.

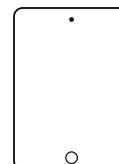
We are considering asking for donations for home visits, placing a donation box at drop-in sessions, and launching a fundraising drive in April. Stay tuned for specific changes and announcements in the next COA newsletter.

*Lizzy Canady*

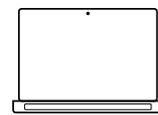
*Nancy Brown*



Smartphone



Tablet



Laptop



Desktop

## TECHNOLOGY HELP FOR MARCH



**NEW Best Ever! TechHub** is returning on alternate Fridays to present workshops. Workshops are one hour beginning at 10:30 am. A 2 hour drop in session will follow. All sessions will be held at 400 Main St., Chesterfield, downstairs. No need to register

|          |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| March 6  | Zoom Basics                     |
| March 20 | Social Media Basics             |
| April 3  | Online Safety Basics            |
| April 17 | Avoiding Misinformation         |
| May 1    | Cloud Basics                    |
| May 15   | MS Excel                        |
| May 29   | Windows Operating System Basics |
| June 5   | Designing with Canva            |

**Tech Support** home visit is available by appointment. Call or message 413-296-5080 to arrange a home visit or email [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com) for help.

**Devices for you:** Refurbished PC laptops and iPads. If you need a device to connect to the internet or have something so old it is not working effectively, please contact us. Leave a message at 413-296-5080.

### Drop-in Centers schedules (no appointment needed)

Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.

Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from

12:00 to 2:00, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 3/19

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from

2:00 to 4:00, 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 3/26

Williamsburg

Meekins Library Drop-In tech support from 10 :30 to

12:30, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 3/10

Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support from

10:00 to Noon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 3/10

Worthington tech support - contact Eileen Daneri

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

NOTE: Plainfield and Cummington residents should call 413-296-5080 for an appointment or use the Chesterfield site.

### **Internet Hotspots**

Funding for hotspots data ended in February. Call 413-296-5080 for help on finding the right low- cost internet plan for you.

## TECH TALK

from Peg Whalen

I want to share once again an experience I had a while ago so that others can benefit from my mistake. On a trip to Philadelphia by train I brought two carry-on bags with me and my laptop. To keep the laptop safe when I briefly left my seat I tucked it overhead between my carry-on bags. Later, when I was exiting the train, I got distracted. I grabbed both carry-on bags and, yup, you guessed it, I left the laptop behind. Losing the laptop itself was frustrating but could be replaced at some expense. The information loss was a tragedy. Before leaving, I had not backed up the files, photos, and programs on the laptop. **I knew better!** It happened anyway.

Backup your information in case of device loss, viruses, scams, equipment failure. If you do not know how to protect electronic information, find assistance with ways to stay safe.

What should I have done? I could have used one of the "clouds", like Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, Apple iCloud, or my external hard drive at home.

I urge you to consider attending the May 1<sup>st</sup> Cloud Basics workshop offered by TechHub. Make an informed decision about trusting Clouds. I wish I had had my head in the Clouds!

## #SlamTheScam 2026



National "Slam the Scam" Day is designated by Social Security's Office of the Inspector General to raise awareness of government imposter scams, which continue to spread across the United States. Slam the Scam Day is Thursday, March 5, 2026, as part of National Consumer Protection Week, which takes place this year from March 1-7.

Watch for more info at

<https://youtu.be/c6svESSADHM>