

Cummington Council on Aging



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

-BINGO on April 15

-Health Talk on April 21

-Mahjong starting on April 22

-Resource, Volunteer and Job Fair on April 25

(more information on the following pages)

RESOURCE, VOLUNTEER & JOB FAIR

Saturday, April 25, 10-2

**New Hingham Elementary School,
30 Smith Road, Chesterfield**

RESOURCES

JOBS

INFORMATION

VOLUNTEER

DOOR PRIZES

SUPPORT

GIVEAWAYS

We will be at the **Resource, Volunteer & Job Fair on Saturday, April 25th from 10-2**. Come see us there, say hello and learn about the **available resources**, and **meaningful volunteer and work opportunities** that exist to support you. Turn to the first page of the regional section of this newsletter to see the list of local organizations and agencies that will be there and for more details of what you will find at this fair.

33 Main Street
P.O. Box 95
Cummington, MA 01026
413-634-2262, option 8
croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov

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

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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!

SAVE THE DATES IN MAY

Mahjong – every Wednesday, 9:30-11:30

Potluck lunch – May 13

Health Talk – Tuesday, May 19, 9-11

MAHJONG

Instruction/lessons: April 22 and April 29

Weekly games begin May 6

Community House dining room

Interested in learning to play Mahjong? Meg Allard and Nancy Gokey, Mahjong players and retired teachers, will introduce this game on Wednesdays, **April 22 and 29 from 9:30 - 11:30 am.** After those two introductory lessons, Meg and Nancy will host a **weekly Mahjong game, starting May 6th, every Wednesday, from 9:30-11:30.** You do not need to attend the introductory lessons to join the weekly game.

You also do not need to attend every week. Come to learn, play or just watch! Please call or email the COA and leave your name and phone number if you are interested in participating or have any questions.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH PRESENTATIONS

The next important **health talk** by the Public Health Nurses from the Northampton Dept. of Health and Human Services will be on **Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> from 9-11 a.m.** The topic is **Health Advocacy & Healthcare Proxies.** There will be a short presentation, plenty of time for questions, and blood pressure readings.

*Refreshments will be served.*

### Upcoming presentations:

May 19: Step Safely: Caring for Your Feet to Prevent Falls

June 16: Health Impact of Heat on Older Adults

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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 \_\_\_\_\_



# BINGO



April 15, 2-4 p.m.

FREE

FUN

CASUAL

Join us for some fun, free, casual games of Bingo on **Wednesday, April 15 from 2-4 p.m.!**

A lovely opportunity to get together, play some low-key games of Bingo and win fun prizes!

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## COMPUTER WORKSHOPS IN CHESTERFIELD – UPDATED & NEW

TechConnect and TechHub continue to hold workshops at the Chesterfield Senior Center (400 Main St., Chesterfield). All workshops run from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Call 413-296-5080 and leave a message to register.

**April 3 - Online Safety & Avoiding Misinformation**

**April 17 - Introduction to Google Workspace**

**May 1 - Cloud Basics & Google Drive**

**May 15 - MS Excel Basics**

**May 29 - Windows 11 Operating System Basics**

**June 12 - Designing with Canva**

**June 26 - Zoom Basics**

| Monday                                                                            | Tuesday                                                                    | Wednesday                 | Thursday                                                                | Friday                                                             | Sat/Sun                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |                                                                            | 1                         | 2<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour<br>1 Needlework  | 3<br>10:30 Computer workshop - Online Safety (in Chesterfield)     | 4/5                                                              |
| 6<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour                            | 7<br>12 Grab & Go<br>3:45 Healthy Bones & Balance                          | 8                         | 9<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour<br>1 Needlework  | 10                                                                 | 11/12                                                            |
| 13<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour                           | 14<br>12 Grab & Go<br>1 Living Fully<br>3:45 Healthy Bones & Balance       | 15<br><b>2-4 BINGO</b>    | 16<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour<br>1 Needlework | 17<br>10:30 Computer workshop - Google Workspace (in Chesterfield) | 18/19                                                            |
| 20<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour                           | 21<br><b>9 Health Talk</b><br>12 Grab & Go<br>3:45 Healthy Bones & Balance | 22<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b> | 23<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour<br>1 Needlework | 24                                                                 | 25/26<br><b>HILLTOWN RESOURCE, JOB &amp; VOLUNTEER FAIR 10-2</b> |
| 27<br>9:30 Healthy Bones & Balance<br>10:30 coffee hour                           | 28<br>12 Grab & Go<br>3:45 Healthy Bones & Balance                         | 29<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b> | 30                                                                      |                                                                    |                                                                  |

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 - NEW DAY**

The next foot care clinic will be on **Friday, May 1** 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 - buckets**

If you received a delivery of sand this past winter, please hold onto any leftover sand (as well as the bucket). If your bucket is empty, please return it to the COA or to the transfer station.

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

The next Zoom meeting for this group is Tuesday, April 14. 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)**

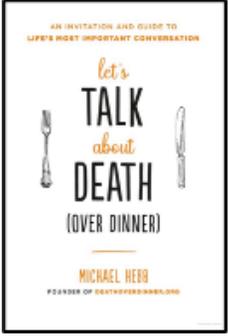
Jennifer O'Connell at 413-296-4536 ext. 110 or [communityconnectjo@gmail.com](mailto:communityconnectjo@gmail.com) -services include assistance with obtaining benefits, such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security; helping you live independently in your home; assistance with home repairs and transportation;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

### **Happy Birthday in April**

Anne Corwin, Michael Falcone, Dorset Anderson, Susan Riley, Nancy Noyes, Karen Westergaard, Hilarione O'Leary, Randall Fisher, Jay Brumberg, Richard LaFrancis, Joyce Dempsey, Karen Barker, Judith Bowerman Slezak, Margaret Parker, Luahn Page, Betty Tessier, James Ridell, Peggy Thorn, Diane Bevan, Greta Redzko, Matthew Grallert, David Bowman, Laura Sullivan, Robert Goff, Michael Crotty, John Heon, Lora Grimes



# April Regional News



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 7th and 14th 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. We still have space. 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



## SAVE THE DATE

### Hilltown Resource, Volunteer & Job Fair

Whether you are seeking assistance, wanting a way to give back or looking for part-time work, this fair has something for everyone regardless of age.

Please join us! ALL community members encouraged to attend

Saturday, April 25, 2026

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**New Hingham Elementary School**  
**30 Smith Rd, Chesterfield, MA**

**Why Come?** Our hilltowns thrive when we show up for one another. Your impact can be profound. Help strengthen the economy and networks that enrich our community and serve older adults.

**What You Will Find?** We will have information brochures, limited **tech help, blood pressure clinic**, and HEN program help and job **applications**. There also are **giveaways and door prizes**: Campground stay, Williamsburg Market gift certificates, stained glass, and others.

### Participating organizations include:

- Hilltown CDC,**
- Highland Valley Elder Services,**
- HEN Program,**
- Foothills Health District, SHINE,**
- Trinity Health, Service Net,**
- TechConnect,**
- Veterans Affairs,**
- Elder Care Access,**
- New England Wound Center,**
- Consumer Protection,**
- Funeral Consumer Alliance**
- Blood Pressure Clinic, and more**

## GOOD NEWS FOR APRIL 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

### Finding home care resources can be a challenge.

If you need a little help...like grocery shopping, rides to medical appointments, meal prep, trips to the bank, or help remembering to take Rx, there are several affordable resources available.

If you need help daily for personal care like bathing, dressing as well as help with laundry and meal prep, then finding a reliable, skilled provider can be more complex.

Let's start with those of us who need a little bit of help to keep ahead of housework, laundry and making meals. And perhaps you want to give up driving, but still need to get to medical appointments, or out to do errands.

Affordable resources might include home care services from Highland Valley Elder Services, 586-2000 or the HEN (Hilltown Elder Network) program at the Hilltown CDC 296-4232.

Your COA or senior center might be able to help with transportation to appointments and help with meals. They also can recommend ways to get you started thinking about what kind of help you need, and who provides it. Most of these services are free or at a low cost.

For even more help understanding what's available, call the Community Connector, 413-296-4536 ext. 110, or send an email to [communityconnectjo@gmail.com](mailto:communityconnectjo@gmail.com).

Highland Valley has a free consultation service called Options Counseling which can give you an overview of resources for your particular situation.

## The next challenge is paying for home care services.

Home care help can be paid for a number of ways.

1. Medicare pays for home care services if you are discharged home after rehab or hospital for a planned surgery or after an unplanned medical event. Your doctor can "write orders" for OT, PT or RN. While helpful, these services are not designed to give you daily assistance and are short term, usually for 2-4 weeks.
2. If you need more help and are an eligible veteran, you may be able to get ongoing services through the VA. Call your senior center to see when you can speak with your veteran's agent.
3. While Medicare doesn't pay for ongoing home care help, MassHealth does. And you may be eligible for MassHealth benefits. Check with your SHINE counselor for eligibility requirements. 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.
4. Long Term Insurance policies, if you have one, pay for home care benefits. So dust off that policy you began years ago and read the contract to see how to access your benefit.
5. Paying privately is expensive, but if you want to stay home safe and get the care you need, this may be the time to consider it.

Next month we'll talk about how to look for home care services providers. Meanwhile, don't miss an opportunity to see what's available at the **April 25th Resources Fair which is being held at New Hingham School** in Chesterfield.

**See you there!**

## DEMENTIA TALK – FOR CAREGIVERS

Are you a caregiver of a person who has dementia? Caregiving is hard work; education, support, and community can all have a positive impact! Heidi Zahra, MSN RN, is a faculty lecturer at the Elaine Marieb College of Nursing from UMass Amherst.

**On Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 10am in Plainfield,**

Zahra will speak with caregivers on the topic of sleep, a very common challenge for caregivers of people with dementia. She will also share additional educational offerings and programs for care partners. This is a nice way to connect with other caregivers and share ideas and stories.

For more details Contact Polly at [pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us](mailto:pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us) or call 413-212-1581.

## WHAT IS THE NORTHERN HILLTOWNS CONSORTIUM?



The Northern Hilltowns Consortium (NHC) is comprised of the Directors/Coordinators of seven Northern Hilltowns – Williamsburg, Westhampton, Chesterfield, Goshen, Cummington, Worthington and Plainfield.

This group of COAs has been meeting monthly since the late 1990's. It is a partnership, collaboration, support group, network of dedicated, knowledgeable, and highly effective COA leaders. The group focuses on ways to improve quality of life, help maintain independence, reduce isolation and loneliness to support aging in place in the hilltowns.

The Consortium has had success in applying for grants over the years because our small towns collaborate. This funding benefits our seven-town region, most notably bringing you the TechConnect Program (nearly \$300,000 in 2023). The NHC has been awarded Service Incentive Grants (SIG) since 2015 to develop and coordinate services in our region. For several years we have also received Highland Valley Elder Service grants for our Community Connector Program, intergenerational and fitness programming. The group has hosted region wide events, such as the successful "Let's Have a Conversation about Memory", featuring Dr. Rebecca Starr. NHC collaborates to get grants and create worthwhile events to bring to you and our communities.

The NHC website contains every COA's newsletter each month. We encourage you to read all or some of them. It also has a variety of information about resources, tech services, and town COA details. Please visit the website at <https://www.northernhilltownscoas.org>.

**All seven of the Consortium Councils on Aging will be at the April 25<sup>th</sup> Resource, Volunteer and Job Fair**

## FREE GUIDED TOUR - MELVILLE HOMESTEAD



A free guided tour of Arrowhead, Herman Melville's historic home and farm, is planned for Friday April 17th from 11am to noon. It is located at 780 Holmes Road in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. At least 12 participants are needed for this event. Please RSVP with Polly at [pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us](mailto:pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us) or call 413-212-1581

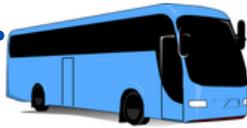
## COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

The Hilltown Elder Network (HEN program) is looking to help our Hilltown seniors! If you are in need of assistance with house cleaning, meal prep, grocery shopping, or transportation please call the number below to sign up. It is a free service, if income eligible, provided by the Hilltown CDC.

If you are a senior looking to make a little extra money (\$22 an hour) while helping out a community member, please call! Hours are flexible and can be as little as two hours a week. We have some HEN caregivers that are also receive HEN services.

We will be having a job fair on Saturday, April 25th from 10-2 at New Hingham Elementary school. The Hilltown Elder Network will have a booth with all the info you will need to get started as a caregiver or sign up to begin receiving help. Feel free to contact Jennifer O'Connell at 413-296-4536 ext. 110 or email at [jennifero@hilltowncdc.org](mailto:jennifero@hilltowncdc.org) for more information or to sign up sooner than the job fair.

## 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**

**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 NOW to the address above. Wait list available.

**Day Trip May 8<sup>th</sup>, Friday, FDR Homestead, Library and Val Kill.** Contact Forbes Library 413-587-1011.

**Day Trip June 11th, Thursday, 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 NOW to the address above. I need 10 more to make the trip a-Go.

**Day Trip June 23rd, Tuesday, 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 NOW to the address above.

**Day Trip July 12, 13, 14 or 15 Tall Ships in Boston**  
Contact First Choice Tours 1-413-665-9090.

**Day Trip August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Monday 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**



**TechHub** workshops and tech support sessions are returning to Chesterfield. Alternate Friday workshops are 1-hour beginning at 10:30 am. Technical support drop-in sessions follow from 11:30-1:30. All sessions are held downstairs at 400 Main St., Chesterfield. Classes are free. No need to register. See below for date and topic changes from previous newsletters.

### Workshops

**April 3 Online Safety & Avoiding Misinformation**

**April 17 Introduction to Google Workspace**

May 1 Cloud Basics & Google Drive

May 15 MS Excel Basics

May 29 Windows 11 Operating System Basics

June 12 Designing with Canva

June 26 Zoom Basics

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 (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, 4/16

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from 2:00 to 4:00, 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 4/23

Williamsburg

Meekins Library Drop-In tech support from 10 :30 to 12:30, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 4/14

Nash Hill Place Resident tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 4/14

Worthington tech support - contact Eileen Daneri [eadaneri@gmail.com](mailto:eadaneri@gmail.com).

*NOTE: Plainfield/Cummington residents should call 413-296-5080 for an appt or use Chesterfield site.*

### Internet Hotspots

Hotspot funding ended. Call 413-296-5080 for help on finding the right low- cost internet plan for you.