

Cumington Council on Aging



What is happening at the COA in September? In addition to the regular, recurring events and activities, we will be offering:

Lunch & Learn Program – The Refugee Hostel: The Real Cumington Story on Tuesday, September 15, 11:30-1 (registration required)

Potluck Lunch on Wednesday, September 23, 11:30-1 (with presentation on HCDC's transportation program)

Coffee Hour Health Talk on Monday, September 28, 10:30-11:30; Topic: Tick & Mosquito Safety

Look for more information on these programs below and on the following pages.

POTLUCK LUNCH
Wednesday, September 23
11:30: social time/ noon: lunch
Community House dining room

Join us on **Wednesday, September 23** for a potluck lunch. We will be serving meatloaf, mac & cheese, mashed potatoes, carrots, peas and more. Please bring a desert to share, if you are able.

A representative from the Hilltown CDC will be at the lunch to give a brief presentation and answer questions on the HCDC's transportation program.

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

<https://www.cumington-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, transfer station 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 OCTOBER\***

Bingo – Wed., October 14, 2-4

Lunch & Learn – Tues., October 20, 11:30-1

Vaccine clinic – Wed., October 21, 10-1

Health Talk - Mon., October 26, 10:30-11:30

**\*look for more information on these events in the October newsletter**

## LUNCH & LEARN PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Free monthly presentation

Lunch provided

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

**COMMUNITY HOUSE DINING ROOM**

**September 15** – The Refugee Hostel: The Real Cummington Story (see details below)

**October 20** – Stay ahead of scammers to keep your money and personal information safe.

The Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit shares tips to help recognize the signs of a scam and tricks scammers use to gain trust. They will also share information about how to protect against identity theft.

**November 3** – Learn about medical alert devices/ systems.

## COFFEE HOUR HEALTH TALKS SCHEDULE

**COMMUNITY HOUSE DINING ROOM**

Public Health Nurses from the Northampton Dept. of Health and Human Services will be joining us for a **monthly Health Talk** during **Monday morning coffee hour – between 10:30-11:30**. There will be a short presentation, time for questions, and optional blood pressure readings. Light refreshments will be served.

**September 28** -- Tick & Mosquito Safety

**October 26** -- From Prevention to Management: Making Sense of Lab Tests and Screenings

**November 16**--Healthy Minds, Healthy Aging: Mental Health for Older Adults

*\*NOTE: Monday morning coffee hour follows exercise class; you do not need to attend exercise class to attend coffee hour*

## JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST LUNCH & LEARN PROGRAM

**THE REFUGEE HOSTEL: THE REAL CUMMINGTON STORY**

**Presentation by Grayson Hawthorn**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 11:30-1; LUNCH PROVIDED BY ALICE'S KITCHEN**

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED; PLEASE CONTACT THE COA BY SEPTEMBER 9**

In 1940, Rev. Carl Sangree of the Cummington Congregational Churches opened a hostel on Main Street for German and Austrian refugees. Sangree and others assisted them as they adjusted to their new lives in America. The hostel was established to support the new arrivals with housing, food, English language skills, and employment. Many of the refugees fled from Europe due to Nazi Germany's rise to power, and faced challenges throughout their journey, whether it was visa issues or treacherous conditions. Over the next four years, 39 refugees stayed at the hostel, including professors, artists, writers, children and more. In 1944, the United States Office of War Information produced a film titled *The Cummington Story* based on the refugee hostel, which was filmed in Cummington and starred a few of the actual refugees as well as local residents. This talk will focus on the story of the refugees, Carl Sangree, as well as *The Cummington Story*.

*Grayson Hawthorn is the Assistant Archivist at the Kingman Tavern Museum.*

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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\_\_\_\_\_

# VACCINE CLINIC - OCTOBER 21, 10-1 REGISTER NOW!

## COMMUNITY HOUSE AUDITORIUM

Flu and Covid vaccines will be available at the October 21<sup>st</sup> vaccine clinic at the Community House. Registration required. See information on flyer below, or call the COA with your questions. Are you homebound? Contact the Northampton Dept. of Health and Human Services for help.

## FALL VACCINE CLINIC

### Cummington Community House

33 Main St, Cummington, MA 01026

Wednesday  
October 21, 2026  
10:00am - 1:00pm



### OR REGISTER ONLINE:

[northamptonma.gov/2219/vax](http://northamptonma.gov/2219/vax)



Hampshire Public Health  
Shared Services Collaborative  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



**FLU VACCINE**  
Regular (6mos +)  
High Dose (65+)



**COVID Vaccine**  
Pfizer (65+)  
18+ & considered high risk.

\*If you are 18 + and unsure about getting a COVID vaccine, talk with your primary care provider. If they recommend vaccination, we can provide it at our clinic after you complete a vaccine eligibility screening questionnaire.



**NEED HELP REGISTERING?**  
Call: 413-587- 4903  
[nurses@northamptonma.gov](mailto:nurses@northamptonma.gov)

- Please bring your insurance card, vaccines are free to you
- Limited Walk-ins, pre-registering is recommended



## HOMEBOUND VACCINE PROGRAM

Amherst, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington,  
Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield,  
Huntington, Middlefield, Northampton,  
Plainfield, Southampton, Worthington



### SCAN THE QR CODE



### OR REGISTER ONLINE

[northamptonma.gov/2219/vax](http://northamptonma.gov/2219/vax)



Hampshire Public Health  
Shared Services Collaborative  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



**NEED HELP REGISTERING?**  
Call: 413-587- 4903



**COVID VACCINE**  
Pfizer



**FLU VACCINE**  
Regular and High Dose  
(available during flu season)

• Homebound visit available for Covid, Flu vaccine for ADULTS only

• Homebound includes persons with limited mobility and/or difficulty getting out of the home and their caretakers.

• Please have your insurance card available



## Breaking News from Deb Hollingworth

As of October 1st...if you go through Mass General Brigham Women's/Cooley Dickinson for your Primary Care Physician...and you have a BlueCross BlueShield HMO Medicare Advantage Plan.....your PCP will no longer be able to bill your BlueCross. If you have a BlueCross BlueShield PPO Medicare Advantage Plan, you should expect an increase in co-pays when you see your PCP. All other medical providers, like hospitals or specialists are still covered.

Open Enrollment is coming up October 15th - December 7th. This is our annual opportunity to change plans. Folks with the BlueCross HMO should definitely plan on a change. Folks with the Blue Cross PPO should probably consider a switch.

Stay tuned for more information in next month's newsletter. Meanwhile, you can email [coa.volunteer@burgy.org](mailto:coa.volunteer@burgy.org) with your questions.

| Monday                                                                                   | Tuesday                                                  | Wednesday                            | Thursday                                                                         | Friday                             | Sat/Sun |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                          | 1<br>12 Grab & Go                                        | 2<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b>             | 3<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour<br>1 Needlework  | 4<br>9 <b>Foot Care<br/>Clinic</b> | 5/6     |
| 7<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour                          | 8<br>12 Grab & Go<br>1 Living Fully                      | 9<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b>             | 10<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour<br>1 Needlework | 11                                 | 12/13   |
| 14<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour                         | 15<br>11:30 <b>Lunch &amp;<br/>Learn</b><br>12 Grab & Go | 16<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b>            | 17<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour<br>1 Needlework | 18                                 | 19/20   |
| 21<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour                         | 22<br>12 Grab & Go                                       | 23<br>11:30 <b>Potluck<br/>Lunch</b> | 24<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 coffee<br>hour<br>1 Needlework | 25                                 | 26/27   |
| 28<br>9:30 Healthy<br>Bones &<br>Balance<br>10:30 <b>Coffee<br/>Hour Health<br/>Talk</b> | 29<br>12 Grab & Go                                       | 30<br>9:30 <b>Mahjong</b>            |                                                                                  |                                    |         |

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.;

**NOTE:** The Tuesday class is cancelled for the summer

**Coffee hour**

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

**Needlework group**

Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m.

**Mahjong**

Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30. **Beginners are welcome!**

**Foot care clinic**

The next foot care clinic will be on **Friday, September 4** with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$50 for Cummington residents and \$60 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 413-296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

**Living Fully, Aging Gracefully**

The next Zoom meeting for this group is Tuesday, September 8. For more information, contact [annieb@crocker.com](mailto:annieb@crocker.com) or [fandellaf@gmail.com](mailto:fandellaf@gmail.com) or call Lucy at 413-634-5576.

**Exercise Equipment**

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

**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. **See information on other drop-in centers in the Regional section of this newsletter.**

**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 September**

Ida Pearce, Verna Ridel, Helen Larkin, Wynne Busby, Susan Forgea, Joe King, John Maruskin, Lawrence Panzeri, Elaine Drawe, Deborah Hoechstetter, Jane Adams, Cynthia Jirak, Carol Hoehne, David Simard, John Miller, Paula Zindler, Paul Streeter, Margaret Kelleher, Aliza Ansell, Maureen Lavigne, Linda Matuewezski, Roger Wolf, Kathleen Beaudin, Sarah Stockwell-Arthen, Mark Whelihan, Claudia Waite, Michelle Megna, Rosemary Wessell, Timothy Schuler, Wyn Joyner, Mark Pollard

# EXCITING TOWN NEWS!!



YOU ARE  
INVITED!



## Cummington Awarded \$322,225 to Build Climate Resilience



The project will transform the Berkshire Trail Building into a climate-ready Resilience Hub with a local and regional shelter, a regional food hub, and climate-resilient landscaping.

**Don't miss  
updates!**

More info:  
[cummington-ma.gov](http://cummington-ma.gov)

# RIVERFEST '26

A free, family-friendly celebration of place and community in Cummington. Hands-on arts and ecology projects, walks, screening, music, and more!

## Saturday, September 19

More details: <https://cummingtonculture.art/riverfest>

Supporters:



Organizers:



## YOU ARE INVITED TO THIS PROGRAM IN GOSHEN

**Sharing and Caring: A Memory Cafe**

*A group led by two speech-language pathologists  
for adults with memory loss and their care partners.*



Every 1st Thursday, 1pm-2:30pm, Oct 2026-Jun 2027  
John James Memorial Town Hall, 42 Main St. in Goshen, MA  
Contact Kerry at [COA@goshen-ma.us](mailto:COA@goshen-ma.us) or (413) 268-8236, ext. 118

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S CONSUMER PROTECTION UNIT

**SCAM ALERT!**

Scammers are increasingly targeting older adults by convincing them to deposit cash into **cryptocurrency kiosks** (Bitcoin ATMs) located in convenience stores, package stores, gas stations, and other businesses.

How the scam works:

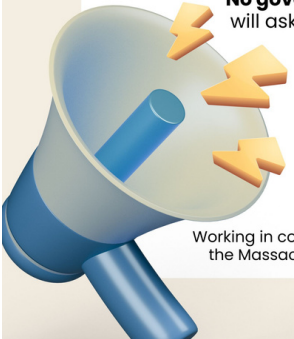
- You receive a phone call, text, or email claiming to be from law enforcement, a government agency, your bank, a utility company, or even a family member in trouble.
- The scammer creates a sense of urgency and instructs you to withdraw cash from your bank.
- They then direct you to a cryptocurrency kiosk and tell you to deposit the money.
- Once the money is sent, it is extremely difficult, often impossible, to recover.

**No government agency or public utility** will ask you to pay with cryptocurrency.

**Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit**

Northampton  
(413) 586-9225  
Greenfield  
(413) 774-3186

Working in cooperation with the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General






# September Regional News

## Seniors Aware of Fire Education



September is Fall Prevention Month, a great reminder to take steps to reduce the risk of falls.

As first responders, we receive many calls each year to assist older adults who have fallen. While some falls result in only minor injuries, others can lead to broken bones, head injuries, or a loss of independence.

The good news is that many of these incidents can be prevented with a few simple changes.

To help reduce your risk:

- Keep walkways, stairs, and entryways free of clutter.
- Secure or remove loose rugs.
- Improve lighting throughout your home, especially at night.
- Install and use handrails on stairs and grab bars in bathrooms.
- Wear sturdy, slip-resistant shoes and avoid walking in socks on smooth floors.
- Have your vision and hearing checked regularly.
- Stay active with exercises that improve strength, flexibility, and balance.

A few minutes spent making your home safer today can help you remain independent, active, and confident for years to come. If you have concerns about fall hazards in your home, don't hesitate to ask a family member, friend, or caregiver for assistance.

Have a safe start to autumn!

Capt. Steve Estelle,  
SAFE Educator  
Goshen Fire Department

**TECH CONNECT**  
SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS



**TECH HELP FOR SEPTEMBER**

TechConnect will be offering **Q&A style classes this fall on the second Tuesday of each month** at the Chesterfield COA Community Center. Bring your questions and contributions to our roundtable discussion. Hosted by Lizzy Canady from 1-2pm on the following dates:

9/8/2026: Artificial Intelligence: Trends & Topics

10/13/2026: Putting your digital house in order

11/10/2026: TBD

12/8/2026: TBD

**No registration necessary.**

**Tech Support home visit is available by appt.** Call or message 413-296-5080 to arrange a home visit.

### Devices for you: Refurbished PC laptops

We have free refurbished laptops while supplies last. Please call 413-296-5080 and leave us a message if you are interested. If you received a device from us and are not using it, please call us to arrange a return so someone else can use it.

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

Sites open to residents of all towns  
(except Nash Hill location)

Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.

Weekly on Every Tuesday from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from

12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 9/17

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from

2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday 9/24

Williamsburg

**Meekins Library** Drop-In tech support (call library for latest information) 413-268-7472

**Nash Hill Place** Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 9/8

Worthington tech support - contact

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



# GOOD NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

From time to time, I get questions about MassHealth's "Estate Recovery" from folks who might be eligible for MassHealth benefits but are worried that "MassHealth will take my house" or any and all other assets. Eligibility rules for MassHealth are different depending on whether you are dead.....or alive.

If you are alive..... and want MassHealth benefits your countable assets must be less than \$2,000.

- Countable is the key word here. MassHealth does not count a car if you have one registered in your name, or a prepaid funeral contract, or term life insurance or your home if it is your primary residence.
- MassHealth does count a car if you have more than one, does count a home if you do not live in it, does count a whole life insurance policy if it has a cash surrender value, does count savings and retirement investments. (IRAs are uncountable if you are still actively contributing to them)

## Excess Assets

If you have more than the allowed \$2,000 in countable assets, you may be able to transfer excess assets out of your name.

As of this writing 2026, you can transfer \$160,000 of countable assets to your spouse. If your assets are more than that, or you own assets jointly with other family members, or friends, you should probably do asset preservation work with an elder law attorney.

MassHealth will count the asset if you are able to access it..... if you no longer own the asset, or can not access it in your life time.... the asset becomes uncountable.

## Asset Transfers

If you are not dead.....but want MassHealth to pay your nursing home bill, the infamous 5 year look back rule applies. Which means MassHealth looks at any/all asset transfers for the 5 years prior to your entering a nursing home.

- If you are married, MassHealth allows you to transfer up to \$160,000 of countable assets to your spouse. This asset limit changes/ increases each year.
- Remaining countable assets will be used to pay your nursing home bill until you have "spent down" to the \$2,000 asset limit.
- If yours is the only name on the deed to your home, MassHealth may put a lien on your property which would be paid when sold.

If you are dead ... have an Estate that will go through Probate... MassHealth will present a bill to Probate for services rendered during the last 10 years of your lifetime. MassHealth starts keeping track of your "bill" after you turn 55, and does not bill estates valued at less than \$25,000.

For more detailed information you might Google MassHealth Estate Recovery.





# LGBTQ+ LUNCH

Join us to share a meal together, see folks you know, and meet those you don't.  
Hilltowns LGBTQ+ residents and allies welcome!

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**Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**12 PM**

400 Main Rd, Chesterfield, MA 01012

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**Register by Sep. 18<sup>th</sup> to join!**

413-296-4007  
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com  
<https://www.townofchesterfieldma.com/council-aging>

## 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 September 28, Monday. The Big E. An annual favorite**, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage. Frankie Avalon performs his hits. Cost \$18 for Northampton Seniors, all other seniors \$20. Make your check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to the address above. Due Now. NO REFUNDS due to bargain price. The bus leaves from Sheldon Field.

**NEW Day Trip Monday October 12th Worthington COA Fall Foliage Bus Trip.** Hudson River Narrated Cruise aboard the Rip Van Winkle II, choice of gourmet boxed lunch on board, and Market stop.

Discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$140 for other seniors.

Call Phyllis at 413-238-5962 or email [coa@worthington-ma.us](mailto:coa@worthington-ma.us) for details & to reserve a seat by September 1st.

## Trips in 2027

### Multi Day Trip April 25- May 1

#### **Savannah, Jekyll Island & Beaufort, SC.**

Seven days, six nights. Visit Savannah, "The Belle of Georgia," Magnificent Beaufort, SC "The queen of the Carolina Sea Islands," and Port Royal Sound Maritime Museum and more. Includes hotels, breakfasts and 4 dinners. Price \$987 per person, double occupancy. A \$25 discount is given if paid in full by January 25, 2027. Sign up NOW and pay later. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above after the first of the year.

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Please email Francine NOW so she can see if there is enough interest to make either of these trips a go:

****3-day/2 nights trip to Baltimore to see the Red Sox play a game against the Baltimore Orioles along with some sightseeing and visit the National Aquarium. Waiting for the 2027 MLB schedule to come out in December to determine dates.**

****Seven day trip to Chicago, partial itinerary includes a tour of Chicago, a skyline cruise on Lake Michigan, visit historic Navy Pier and museums. Possible date: October 17, 2027.**