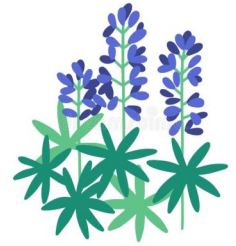


Goshen Council on Aging

June 2020 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
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It's hard to believe that we are sending out the June Newsletter. Our world has changed so much, it is hard to keep up. Heck, we can't even keep up with the weather this year. I have seen it snow in May before but say it isn't so. We need something good to get us through these days. Some nice, sunny, not windy days would be a help.

Last month we were hoping that the news for this month would be better, but as you can see it is not. There were a few plans that were in place just in case, but they did not happen. I do take my senior population very seriously and what I plan is hopefully for the good for everyone. A month ago, when I sat down to write this, I was hoping to have some future fun. Today as I sit and write, I will wait until it is time to plan again. I just finished listening to Governor Baker talk about a 4-phase timeline. Since we are not even in Phase 1 yet, all of our plans for June have been postponed. No band concert and, sadly, no ice cream social. If you could see me, you would see tears in my eyes. NO ICE CREAM! Some of the things I had planned will just be on hold for the fall. It's too early to even plan that.

Hopefully everyone is doing ok. This is a very interesting and tiring time. Please remember to wear a mask, stay 6 feet away when socializing and wash your hands. Sounds like this is our future. We need pretty masks for the summer to cheer us up. If you need a mask, please let Evelyn or Henrietta know so we can get you one. There are people in the town that are making them— thank you for being so kind!

Joan Griswold is continuing to do a great job with the muscle strengthening classes. If you have not joined her, she is live on Zoom. She does classes on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. You can see the whole class and hi to them, but then



she mutes everyone and gets the work done. It is almost as good as being in the town hall but that won't happen anytime soon. She hopes that maybe she can do a few classes outdoors this summer but again we must see how that works out. This is where the new world technology has come into play. When we get our updated internet, life will be easier. If you think you would like to join her class right from your living room, send her an email: joan@bybhealth.com. Using Zoom is free. This has always been partially funded by donations, and we have asked for participants to mail in a donation to the Goshen COA, 40 Main Street, Goshen. It is nice to see all that Joan does to keep our mind and body well.

In the regional news of last month's newsletter there was an article about the **Hilltown Mobile Market**. This was a great program last year and will be here this summer also. It will be an easy way of getting fresh vegetables this summer. If you are interested, please give Caitlin 413-588-5562 or Evelyn a call. They have added to more towns to pick up your vegetables and this summer we are working to deliver to the ones who are not able to go get them. So, if you're interested and do not have a computer to sign up, please give us a call.



The Food Pantry, as of now, is bagging the groceries and bringing them out to your vehicles. This is not just for low income people. During this time when it is difficult to get to the stores, or maybe you're just not ready to risk it, you can come to the food pantry. Evelyn has volunteered to take phone calls and the pantry will deliver the groceries to your door. The pantry is open on Wednesday from 1-3, so if you're interested in having someone bring them to your door, please call Evelyn on Monday or Tuesdays. We do not want anyone to be hungry.

Cauliflower Changed My Life:

Alligators and COVID-19: Part 2

By Lorraine Brisson

The next day we headed northeast to Stephen C. Foster State Park, Georgia. On our way we came across Gilchrist Blue State Park, so we decided to check it out. This was a wonderful find; what we had been looking for. The spring merged into the Santa Fe River. The paddling was ideal, similar to the Little Manatee River, but even better. After a refreshing dip in the spring, we were on the road again.

Stephen C. Foster State Park is in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge; covering 630 square miles of wet prairies and cypress swamps. There is a lot of water, to say the least. We arrived in time to go for a bike ride on the seventeen-mile entrance road—totally flat and paved, with little traffic; a perfect ride. The following day, we decided to paddle to the Big Water overnight shelter. It is located beyond the day use area, but what the heck, we logged our destination at the ranger station so if we did not return, they would know where to go looking for us. It was a leisurely all-day paddle of eighteen miles. The weather was beautiful and no bugs – simply perfect. The next day we paddled a different section. Did I mention that most of the rivers we have paddled so far are full of alligators? There are basically three reactions as we approach them (yes, many times there are multiples) – they quietly dip under water, stay put or make a big splash. I had always assumed that when they dip underwater that they go to the bottom, but I learned that is not the case because that morning, the bow (where I sit) bumped an alligator! And, earlier, we had to put in at a different location because a large alligator was laying across the boat ramp. All ended well and we went for an evening bike ride on the entrance road. The only issues we encountered related to COVID-19 was social distancing in the ranger station/gift store.

The next day we drove north on Rt. 95 to Poinsett State Park, South Carolina. As it turned out, every out-of-state car was also headed north. It was an exodus of epic proportions. After three hours of stop and go, we were glad to exit. After setting up camp, we did a ten-mile hike to the Congaree River. The most interesting thing to see was the devastation the wild boars (invasive species) had inflicted on the land and the park's attempts to capture them. The next day we paddled Cedar Creek at Congaree National Park. There were owls hooting and we paddled by a large flock of White Ibis which took to flight all at once in a wonderful display.

The next day we were off to Table Rock State Park, South Carolina. Arriving at our camp site was somewhat disconcerting, as the camp host nearby had a confederate flag on display. Upon our departure the next day, we called the office and voiced our concerns with the park staff. We

drove to Chimney Rock, North Carolina planning on hiking to the lookout tower to discover that the park was CLOSED. Time to go to plan "B". We discovered a nearby trailhead at Hickory Nut Gorge, Florence Nature Preserve. There were no printed trail maps, so we studied the map on the kiosk figuring we would be OK. Well, it was a maze of colors indicating different trails – red, blue, yellow, orange, white. Which one to take? We were going in circles, meeting dead ends, and never made it to the overlook and to make matters worse, it rained most of the time. Still we enjoyed a great hike surrounded by Mountain Laurel.

Time to look for a state park to camp. Uh oh, the state of NC had closed all state parks. We ended up at a KOA – YUK. In our section, we were two campers out of thirty-four sites. The next day we went to the Biltmore Estate in Ashville. This is a must see, especially for gardeners. Because of COVID-19, the price was reduced from \$60 to \$25 (no house tour). We spent 3 ½ hours walking the grounds. After that, we drove into Ashville and walked the Urban Trail. This is like Boston's Freedom trail, but more confusing to follow.

The next day, KOA was closing its bathrooms, so we decided to head home, starting with the Blue Ridge Parkway. We expected to hike Mt. Mitchell, the high point of NC, only to discover it was CLOSED! Now we really were heading home. Back to Rt. 95 where we sailed through Washington D.C., Baltimore, and New York City in record time, arriving home at 2:00am Friday morning. Overall, an exciting and adventure filled trip.

Women's Club will not meet in June. We will try again in September.

Update on Caucus, Town Election and Town Meeting: As it stands right now (5/15), the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for July 25th at 9:30am in the town hall. In addition, pending passage of special legislation, the caucus will be on June 22nd, and the town election on August 1st. More details to come. Visit the town website for the most up-to-date info: www.goshen-ma.us.

Happy Birthday in June!



Edmond Greenwood, Donald Boisvert,
Lynn Rancourt-Tomasaukas, Terrylee Crowther,
Andrew Perkins, John Monaghan,
Patricia Murphy, Susan Wallace, James Sands,
Constance Schwaiger, Darlene Roberts,
Diane Mollison, Gregory Linscott,
Jonathan Mayer, Jean Adamites,
Richard Williams, Henri Zajac,
Deborah Zebrowski, Valerie Durant,
Rebecca Barrows, Richard Schneider,
Joanne Bradshaw, David Lutz

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



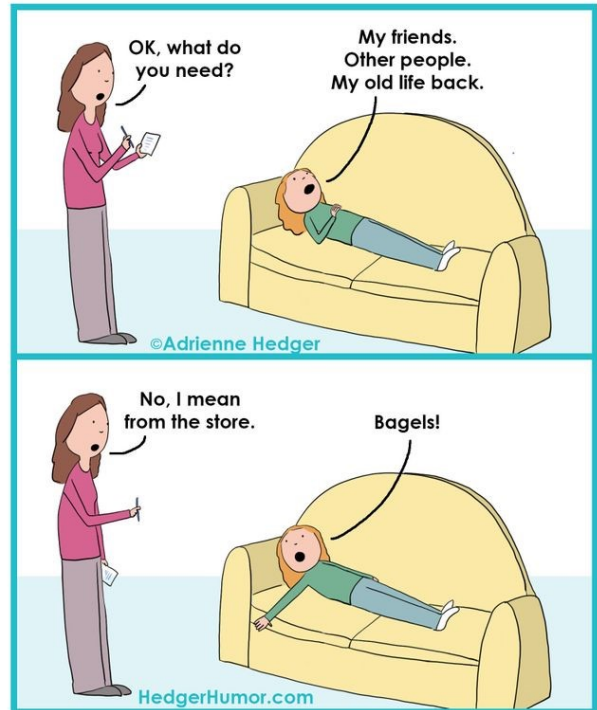
As we stay at home during the pandemic, it gives us a good opportunity to do a safety check of our homes. This month the focus is on electrical safety. Here are some things to think about and/or do:

- Electrical work should be done by a licensed electrician.
- Check all electrical appliances and replace cracked, damaged or loose cords.
- Have outlets replaced if plugs do not fit snugly or the outlet does not accept plugs with one blade larger than the other.
- Plug only one high-wattage appliance into an outlet at a time, even if there is space for another one.
- Avoid using extension cords as fixed features.
- Be sure that arc fault interrupters have been professionally installed to shut off the electricity when a dangerous situation occurs.
- Find reasons for blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers and have an electrician inspect and correct the problem.

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Scenes From Self-Isolation



Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

Sorry – more organization!

One of my cousins is very well organized. I am her backup executor and every year she sends me an updated list of all her financial stuff including passwords. For most of us, it is an amazement to get this done once, never mind every year. But if we can emulate her, our survivors will thank us! Here is a list of questions that should be addressed, with the answers written out and given to those who will deal with our affairs. Do recognize that the person who holds your power of attorney, or eventually your executor, will be able to access documents. But giving them a jump start is really helpful.

- * Do you have a will, where is it kept, and who is the attorney who prepared it?
- * Have you given someone a power of attorney for financial affairs? If so, who is it, and where is the document kept?
- * Have you given someone a power of attorney for health care? Same questions as above.
- * Have you done a MOLST and/or other end-of-life instructions? And where are those?
- * What bank do you use?
- * Do you have a safety deposit box? Where is the box located and where are the keys? Do you have a current list of contents for the box? And where is it? I hope not only in the box...
- * Where are essential personal papers such as birth and marriage certificates, Social Security and military service records, retirement papers?
- * Where are life, health, and property insurance policies kept? Who issued each of the policies and how do you reach them?
- * Do you have a financial adviser? How do you reach him or her?

Feel free to add any questions that apply specifically to you and that are not covered here. Thanks to Marsha Goetting at the Montana State Extension Service for the genesis of this list.

Neatly,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

I'm hoping as you read this next month, in June, that Spring has finally arrived and we have seen the last of frost and snow. Safe to plant tomatoes, safe to begin to relax our social distancing? However, the landscape has changed, and getting together in large groups may not be part of our lives for a while. If there is good news in all this, it is that we have discovered new ways to help each other. Neighbors are volunteering to help those who cannot get out to do grocery shopping, need to get to medical appointments, or just need to hear another voice. Check and chat activities have sprung up, more of us are learning to Zoom and connect virtually. All of us are checking in with our family and friends more often, and developing a new appreciation for what, perhaps, we had taken for granted....human contact.



Hilltown senior centers are creating a host of new activities, and thinking of new ways to be safe, promote wellness, and stay in touch. If you want to volunteer to help a neighbor, if you need food, if you need puzzles, books, or help with errands, the Good News this month is that you can call your senior center, it's just a phone call away.

Explore the World without Leaving Home

Feeling cooped up and longing to explore a new landscape or historic interior?

Here are some virtual tours to explore online:

- Virtual MA, Massachusetts Regional Tourism Councils: www.massvacation.com/virtual-ma
- Panorambles: www.panorambles.com
Rich, detailed tours photographed by local photographer Mark Roessler.
- Visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see its British Galleries and a presentation:
www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2020/british-galleries
- Historic Deerfield is a treat in its digital form: www.historic-deerfield.org.
- Mass Moments is a daily almanac of Massachusetts history. Visit the website to read short essays depicting an event in Massachusetts for each day of the year:
www.massmoments.org



Listen by Naomi Shihab Nye

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.

Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to gaze at bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
It is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.



Living in a New World

Covid-19 has launched people of all ages into a new world of cyber communication. It's a "push that came to shove" when the triple challenge emerged to protect older adults from exposure to the virus, finding ways to stay close while following guidelines for social distancing and reach out to each other as the new norms of "normal life" evolve.

We are fortunate that the timing of changes comes as we are finally about to get Broadband in the Hilltowns. Learning to use the internet is becoming more and more a necessity than a luxury as we build stronger communities.

Highland Valley Elder Services has informed us that "each Council on Aging can receive as much as \$3500 of Title IIIB community support funds to better equip COAs in providing services in creative and adaptive ways, to meet the changing needs of our senior population due to Covid-19. "The goal is to allow COAs to promote greater capacity to provide remote services to consumers during the Covid pandemic and beyond."

Some examples of funding include upgraded technology and capacity to communicate by using updated technology and internet services

What kind of programs do we envision? One of the most important issues in developing "Age Friendly Communities" is the desire for more and more accessible information about life in our communities, not just about older adults, but for everyone. Some of us will be setting up computer classes using interactive screens to teach the basics for small groups wanting to talk with each other in limited but social distancing locations. Much better than a teacher moving from person to person to coach you by looking over your shoulder at individual small screens. It'll all be on a big screen onsite that allows you to actually see how to operate and change information tailored to your community or region. It could also be done through the internet with a teacher available both in person and online.

Three of the COAs in the Hilltowns already provide exercises with Joan Griswold's use of ZOOM classes and others are invited. Funding from Highland Valley currently supports this important program. More than one chair yoga teacher plans to also offer some online classes. Who would have thought that we could expand contact and health programs by seeing each other virtually? It's not the same as up front and personal, but as we gradually move toward safer ways of coming together we can also keep our online relationships going.

By the time you read this, you will have no doubt learned of other new programs and services. The Chesterfield COA has wanted for some time to let people what is going on at the Community Center without having to come inside.



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DOOR-to-DOOR SALES



Hire me
NOW!

**If you're considering hiring someone
who knocks on your door and offers
home improvement services...**

- Don't rush or feel pressured into making an immediate decision;
- Get a written estimate and tell them you will get back to them;
- Ask for and check their references before agreeing to have the work done;
- Get bids from established, local companies and compare prices;
- Check with your town hall to see if they need a license or permit to solicit door-to-door;
- Check with your local consumer protection program or police department.

*If you have a
consumer problem or
question, contact the*

**Northwestern
District
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Consumer
Protection Unit**

Greenfield
(413) 774-3186
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