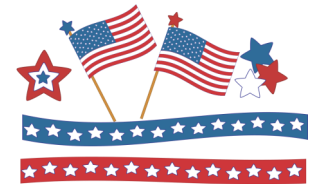


Goshen Council on Aging

July 2020 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032

Evelyn Culver, Coordinator
413-268-3316
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Here we are in summer, but I'm not thinking it is fun for everyone. The weather changes from heat to a near frost in just a matter of days. We are New Englanders and that's how we ride the weather. As far as the rest of what's going on in the world, even New Englanders are having a hard time with the changes.

At least the weather is getting better as we brace for a warm summer. We are fortunate that we live where we do so we can at least get outdoors.

Maybe before too long we can get together to visit social distant style. There will be no 4th of July parade in Chesterfield, no chicken barbeque and no homemade ice cream. I ask each of you to please give yourself the challenge of doing something special for yourself to honor that day. Make sure you have a flag out, or some special decoration. Please do not gather with many people, keep your social distancing, and maybe make a small dish of your favorite salad. Whatever you do, enjoy your day!



We've always had our Appreciation Luncheon in August and I'm almost sure we will not be able to do that this year. If you have someone that you appreciate and would like to honor them in the next newsletter, send Evelyn a little write-up (ematkc@aol.com). It would be a nice time to honor some of the people that have had to help others in this new world we live in. Please send before July 7th.



Thank you to our mask makers:
Beverly Thomas and Roxanne Cunningham!

I would like also like to take a minute to **thank all the town officials** that have had the challenge of continuing to do their work during this difficult time. Most are volunteers and without the town buildings they have had to be creative in order to get their work done. Virtual meetings are a new way of life for a lot of them! Also meeting with masks on and bringing your own pen are just some of the safety precautions that have been put in place to get things done.

Our town clerk has had a challenge trying to plan a safe town caucus and election. Here are upcoming town events. All will be held at the town hall except for the ATM:

- **Annual Town Meeting:** Sat. July 25th, 9am. Location TBD.
- **Annual Town Election:** Sat. August 1st.
- **State Primary:** Tues. Sept. 1st.
- **Presidential Election:** Tues. Nov. 3rd.

Early/ absentee voting is encouraged. Please visit the Mass. Elections Division website for more info and an application: www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/

We just received a whole box of crossword puzzle books!

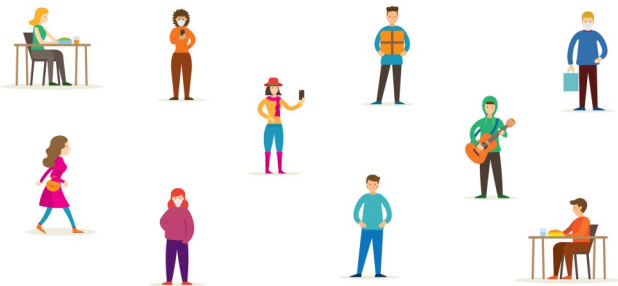
Evelyn will happily drop one off to anyone who would like one. Just give her a call: 268-3316.



Joan is continuing to use Zoom for her muscle strengthening classes. If you would like to join these classes, just email her: joan@bybhealth.com. Life is different and will be this way for a while— so try it out! Joan is paid though the COA, but we are always looking for donations to help with this.

Our Age Friendly group is still here ready to help. If you need anything or just someone to talk to, give Henrietta Munroe a call: 268-7465. She has helped in many ways and would like to help you if you need anything.

Now that we are on the next phase of this pandemic, we can have church services as long as we maintain social distancing. I was out one Sunday morning and went through a town and saw a church service going on outside. It made me smile when I rode by and saw the minister standing on the porch and his parishioners sitting in their lawn chairs, wrapped up in blankets. I'm sure they didn't mind how cold it was if they were all back together.



S O C I A L D I S T A N C I N G

***So far 2020 is like looking both ways
Before crossing the street
And getting hit by an airplane!***

Happy Birthday in July!



- Lisa Newman, Linda Clapp, Brenda Cliché,
- Ronald Loven, Roger Culver, Helen Mollison,
- Caren Miller, Donald Martino, Rose-Marie Carr,
- Peter Andreas, Gary Cunningham,
- Patrice Woodward, Wendy Connell,
- Susan Gesmer, Barbara Querceto,
- Jane O'Riordan, Yvonne Gittelson, William Kelly,
- Rita Petko-Sands, Mary Lou Joyner,
- Evelyn Kellogg-Culver, Marcia Chen, Jeffrey Bliss,
- Laurie St. Amand, Pamela Skinner,
- Chester Brown, Henrietta Munroe, William Fivel,
- Santha Parke, Cynthia Roberts, Ronald Freund,
- Ernest Carver, Denise Linscott, Thomas Rudzik,
- Richard Larson, Anna Dow, Gary Lane,
- John Kroll, Linda Sbrega

***The Goshen COA counts on YOUR support to
continue our important programming for local seniors!***

I would like to contribute to the Goshen COA. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

*(Please write your check to Goshen Council on Aging and write "program support fund" in the memo line.
Checks can be sent to Goshen COA, 40 Main St. Goshen, MA 01032)*

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Goshen Council on Aging

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



This is going to be a different kind of July with 4th of July events cancelled due to COVID 19 and the need to keep socially distanced. One of the events many of us will miss are the fireworks displays exploded by professionals. We may be tempted to make up for this by firing off fireworks and handing out sparklers to children and adults on our own. It is illegal to transport and use fireworks in Massachusetts. Here are a few reasons why:

- Fireworks are very dangerous. Every year fireworks use results in serious injuries and structure fires.
- One third of the serious burn injuries are suffered by children.
- Children imitate adults and know if and where adults have fireworks.
- Even sparklers are very dangerous. They burn at 1200 degrees F. That is very hot considering that wood burns at 575 degrees and glass melts at 900 degrees.

So, please leave fireworks to professionals and help first responders enjoy the holiday with their families. Have a SAFE and quiet July!

--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.

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!



Eternal Electronic Life – or will it end?

This is one thing we did not think about before the last several years! Our social media platforms don't automatically shut down when we do. Our electronic banking apps remain until we tell them to quit. Folks who do not go online don't have to worry - if that is you, feel free to skip to the next newsletter item or go sniff a flower with joy.

Just for grins, the top 7 social media sites this year are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Reddit. And the phrase I found for eternal electronic life is "digital remains." Okay...

So why I am writing this? You may recall I spend some time looking out for scams and identity theft and the like. Well, what a surprise, there are scammers following the obituaries and social media platforms looking for deaths and therefore unattended personal information. They can steal identities, make pleas for money from your friends and followers, use your photos in ads, and in general make mayhem. Something like half of all instances of stolen information were from social media accounts in 2018.

A few of the platforms have a mechanism to allow survivors to manage, close, or delete an account. Some will allow a memorialization, which might be nice to keep for a few months to make sure followers know of the death. In some cases, you can set this up yourself. When you next revise your will, it is a good idea to include these platforms as assets along with instructions. If you follow a social media platform, you should probably search for their policies and figure out what you want.

Yes, life is more complicated,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

Another month battling Covid-19, being good about social distancing, being careful when we do have to go out: it seems harder to maintain our vigilance as the weather warms and our gardens begin to grow. We are impatiently waiting for things to “open up” in hopes that we can imagine a future when things get back to our “new normal”.

Meanwhile we continue to come up with new resources and ways to cope. Initial efforts in the hilltowns have been focused on outreach and food security. Each town’s senior center is checking in with residents, and making sure that folks have food, a way to get their Rx, and sometimes just someone to chat with. Whether it’s signing up for Farm Share, Brown bag, or checking out new “pop up” food pantries (in Chesterfield, Worthington and Williamsburg), the effort continues to make sure seniors have groceries, and someone to shop for them if they need. Senior centers are receiving donations of grocery items, gift cards for grocery shopping, and volunteers to do shopping. Call your senior center if you could use help, or if you know a neighbor who could use help getting meals or groceries.

We’re also beginning to see a new way to socialize. Now that we can’t get out to a potluck luncheon, have extended conversations with neighbors at the dump, or get to church, we are learning new ways to do this virtually. Church services by Zoom...who would have imagined? And now we are learning new FaceTime, Google and Zoom skills? Our local legislators are even more aware of our need for Broadband services as efforts to ramp up senior center activities like chair yoga, cooking and writing classes, and book groups begin to spring up. More to come as these new ideas and resources roll out.

It is a “brave new world” as we work on what our new normal will be.



A COVID Note: Masking Hearing

By Jeane Anastas



Face masks are wonderful and indispensable tools for keeping the COVID-19 virus in check, and I wear one according to state and health guidelines. I feel safer with friends and acquaintances who also wear masks and keep to social distancing rules. Like many, especially among older people, I am hard of hearing (HoH), and age-related hearing loss runs in both sides of my family of origin. When we get diagnosed with hearing loss, most of us have learned that we have unconsciously been reading lips for a long time, and, hearing aids or not, we still use lip reading to enhance our comprehension of speech.

Face masks muffle sound; research shows that the decibels of speech are reduced. In addition, hearing aids or not, the listener cannot see lips moving when people talk, meaning no lip reading is possible. In addition, for those wearing hearing aids, the elastic bands around the ears are not designed to accommodate devices in the ears. When taking off the mask, the elastic can cause the dome of the hearing aid (the part in the ear) to get dislodged, and it is reported that the whole hearing aid may fall out, perhaps getting lost when it is undetected.

While those who communicate using ASL may avoid these particular problems, facial expression is part of the system, compromised by masks. Various websites offer some suggestions to address these mask-related problems. For those using hearing aids, try out fastening systems other than elastic bands. Substitute laces for the elastic that can be tied behind the head. There are small straps for sale that easily connect the elastic bands behind the head. Also for sale are masks that have a clear plastic insert over the mouth area. These are of most help to those who are HoH if others who are speaking with you wear them, and, if you can afford it, they may be worth buying for those one sees most often. When possible, eliminate background noise. Since the speech of others is muffled by the mask, remind people that speaking slowly and enunciating clearly (but NOT shouting) are the best methods of communicating with people with hearing loss, masks or not. Most important, gently remind others about how masks are affecting you since they will want to be supportive. The hardest thing may be to ask.

Dare to Disrupt Aging!

Experiences in moving to the Digital World

You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas. – Shirley Chisholm

As we age, women complain of feeling invisible. Sometimes I feel too visibly 60-plus. In a fashion-driven store like Madewell, a saleswoman who looks like a teenager politely meets my gaze, sweetly saying, "Who are you shopping for today, ma'am?" It makes me smile, as it's almost true: I'm usually browsing for my millennial daughter. Sometimes I buy myself a shirt, albeit not a midriff-revealing one.

Other retail experiences are less amusing. When my computer died, Apple had to migrate my data overnight to my new one. A young Ms. Genius brought it out, boxed and ready for its new abode. I wanted to test it first, so I wouldn't have to return to my least favorite "bar."

She reacted as if I'd requested a dozen iPhones for free. She conferred with a Mr. Genius.

Leaning over me, he sternly warned, "I can't teach you how to use the new computer."

"I never asked you to do that. I *know* how to use it," I snapped back.

Grudgingly Mr. Genius unpacked it, complaining as if I'd asked him to take apart the machine's motherboard and reassemble without a manual. Ms. Genius asked, "Do you need to sit down?"

Her tone was insulting. Couldn't she tell I swam laps four times a week? That I wasn't her *grandmother*? — even though, technically, I could be. In her eyes I seemed to be "old lady + computer = nightmare."

An ominous window popped onto the screen of my new computer. *Word could not be accessed.* Ms. Genius said, "Did you originally download it from a disc?"

"Who remembers what I did six years ago?" I regretted my words, not wanting to solidify her ageist impression of me. "I'll ask my daughter." Why did I say that? My humiliation was amplifying externally as if I'd changed my font size to 48.

Meanwhile, my phone was out of juice. I asked Ms. Genius for a charger.

"This table doesn't have adaptors," she said. "I don't want to make you move."

Being treated like a doddering tech idiot at the Genius Bar made me fume. I felt like listing my career accomplishments. Instead I did what any tech-savvy person would do: I took to Twit-

ter, the suggestion of a friend, a crisis management executive. "They hate it when people complain about customer service on social media," she claimed.

I blasted their treatment of older customers: *Insulting ageism treatment @apple*. Immediate reply: "You're a valued member of our family, and we never want you to feel otherwise. Can you send us a DM with details? We'll meet you there."

I met them privately in Twitterland. A store manager apologized, saying they might have to retrain their staff, begging me to return and talk about any technology problems. I was greeted by people in headphones who knew my name. The cheery manager escorted me up a flight of glass stairs as if it were the red carpet at the Academy Awards. I met one of their "greatest geniuses," who never once said, "This is the phone I told my mother to get." They even threw in free accessories.

I'd discovered the power of Twitter. No more archaic customer service complaint letters for me!

I was already crafting a tweet to emphasize how tech companies need to rethink how they treat "older" consumers.

Retailers aren't the only ones at fault. When I tried out a new gym's pool, a lifeguard placed swimmers into appropriate lanes to share. Quickly sizing me up, he pointed to the lane with the oldest man. "He's too slow for me," I informed him, but he insisted I try it out. I had to keep passing the other swimmer like a Corvette weaving in and out of lanes on the interstate. Drying off afterward, I met the gaze of the lifeguard as if to convey: *I hope you learned a lesson. Don't judge people by their age.*

Soon after I signed up for a group tennis class, where four players were randomly placed together. When the instructor saw me next to three 30-year-old men, he delivered my instructions geared to someone who'd need to sit on the bench between points. My competitive streak went into overdrive. Even though the young guys could outrun me, my technique was more consistent. The teacher's tone changed, my ranking was elevated. Not once during the 90-minute session did I collapse on the bench.

Sure, I iced my knees later — so does 37-year-old Serena Williams. I bristle every time the media qualifies her achievements at every match using the phrase "based on her age." No matter our age, it's time to stop grouping us by false stereotypes others have conjured up. We deserve to be treated with respect, as strong and confident individuals. And to speak out against ageism every time it occurs.



From AARP

**Goshen Council on Aging
Town of Goshen
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032**

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Ways to still enjoy summer during Covid-19:

1. Stargaze
2. Make s'mores in your backyard, or even your microwave!
3. Nap in a hammock
4. Make ice cream sundaes
5. Watch the sun set
6. Make homemade lemonade
7. Go for a scenic drive
8. Bake a fresh blueberry pie
9. Look for fireflies
10. Invite a friend to have a socially distanced talk in the driveway!

happy
Fourth
of July!