

Goshen Council on Aging

August 2020 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
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Without our August picnic we thought it would be nice to honor our 90+ members and so Kathy Boisvert wrote these kind words about them:



Celebrating Goshen's 90+ Seniors

We begin with a bit of history. Past COA coordinator, Elizabeth Loven, began the tradition of recognizing our seniors who were 90+ with a special gift of appreciation. Later, coordinator Rosemarie Clark added the idea of honoring our seniors in person at our August picnic. To this day, coordinator Evelyn Culver, continues this tradition. Our 2020 honor roll celebrates (and in the order of oldest to youngest) all of our twelve 90+ seniors:

Esther Korowski holds the distinction of being the oldest citizen in Goshen. Early on in her life she chose a career of helping others especially when she was employed at Rockridge in Northampton. Esther was ever ready to bring people to their appointments and she always accompanied those trips with lots of smiles and graciousness. Esther holds a deep reverence and love of animals. Just ask her dog Abbey!

Pearle Woodward served as a nurse assistant in the Navy during World War II. While stationed in California, she met the love of her life, John, who was also serving his country at the time. Originally from the Midwest, Pearle had a fondness for New England and settled here in Goshen in 1970. To this day Pearle continues to enjoy the peace and serenity of her home along with being an ardent sports enthusiast!

Ernest Carver is a WW II Air Force veteran and served our country with distinction from 1943-1946. Ernie was stationed in the South Pacific and tasked with taking supplies in and out of the base. Here in town at every election, Ernie has proudly worked the ballot box for many, many years. And oh, the stories Ernie can tell with his amazing skill to detail and his delightful recall of history!

Arlene Harry used her nurse's training as a volunteer for our town ambulance service for a good many years. She served on the COA board, local School Committee and the Historical Commission. For many years, she helped organize the Vacation Bible school held in the Church. A fond memory for many is going to Arlene's home to work on the quilt celebrating our town's 225th Anniversary!

Richard Durant bravely served our country from 1943-46 as a US Navy Seaman. Dick was stationed in the South Pacific aboard a whale boat which was also known as a rescue boat. Here in town, Dick was a constable, field driver and dog officer. He also served as a volunteer in the Fire Department. Memories of Dick in town minstrel shows brings back lots of laughter, talent and community spirit!

Margaret Waggoner was a Professor at Smith College in Northampton. She served on the Community Preservation Committee and the Historical Commission. Margaret's devotion to and knowledge of our Town Museum was always evident as she graciously greeted and educated visitors about our town's history. Margaret enjoys her surroundings and loves listening to sounds of nature and "observing trees, each moving in its own direction."

Ruth Dresser was an early member of the Women's Club, served on the Board of Health and was Assistant Town Treasurer. For the longest time while her husband served as Fire Chief, Ruth served as the town's 911 dispatcher. Her dedication to that position proved priceless for our community. As a co-president of the LBA Society, Ruth recalls many delightful and enjoyable community suppers!

Lawrence Packard is an electrical engineer by training. He was a member of the Congregational Church and served as a Town Assessor for many, many years. Larry was a devoted member of the Historical Society. As a presenter for programs offered to the community by the Society,

Larry would delight his audience with the history and anecdotes of the Packard family history!

Dana Smith, formerly of Connecticut, settled here in Goshen. He and his family live in the Smith House. Throughout all these years, Dana has maintained the beauty and history of this home which is a town treasure! Dana is a talented artist and sculptor. He loves to listen to music particularly Opera. Dana is an ardent reader and enjoys relaxing with a good mystery story!

Welcome *Audrey Bissell*, as our newest member into the distinguished Golden Seniors! Audrey faithfully served as the town tax collector for many, many years. She was President of the LBA at the Congregational Church. Audrey was an instructor in 4H cooking classes and it is no secret that she brings the best pies and cakes to the Council on Aging luncheons!

While not residing here in town, but always in our hearts, we also honor Floyd Merritt and Virginia Otis.

Floyd Merritt worked at Amherst College as its librarian for many years. Using this experience, he served as library trustee for several terms. Floyd also volunteered on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Historical Commission and the Council on Aging. As a member of the Historical Society, Floyd spent many a weekend hosting visitors to our Town Museum which he cared for with such devotion and enthusiasm!

Virginia Otis celebrated her 103rd birthday last year! Throughout all her amazing years, Virginia has enjoyed working at the Gazette, piloting a plane, writing prose and poetry, appreciating the beauty and wonder of nature, volunteering on the COA board, serving as a Library Trustee and being a member of the Woman's Club. To this day, Virginia can beat anyone in Scrabble!

In closing and to all our dear Golden Seniors, please know that we, your Goshen community, remain in awe, grateful and proud to know you, be it as friend, neighbor, citizen. Our town is a better place because you are a part of it.



Happy Birthday in August!

Carolyn Lehan, Miriam Kurland,
 Marie Kelly-Calderone, Raymond Tomasaukas,
 Kevin Lacey, Barbara Bourget, Roger Dow,
 Arlene Harry, Ronald Murphy, Gail Cockoros,
 Kim Dresser, John Harry, Gary Constantilos,
 Gary Holman, Frank Bertrand, Richard Durant,
 Carol Hodge, Xiaoli Chen, Margaret Papineau,
 Matt Harry, Edward Joyner, Judith Carey,
 Robert Thomas, Mary McCulloch, Ruth Dresser,
 Adrienne Racz, John Doyle, Humberto Rodriguez,
 Margaret Waggoner, Carol Stevenson,
 Jacqueline Hayden, Robert Horton,
 Raymond Sheehan

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

Preventing Heat Stress

People who are most at risk for health effects because of extreme heat events can take steps to protect themselves by staying in air conditioned or cooler locations during heat waves, or indoors when air quality is poor. To find a facility to get cool during extreme heat in your area, check out information on Cooling Centers. Other steps to prevent heat related illness are listed below.

- ⇒ If there is no air conditioning in the home, open windows and shades on the shady side and close them on the sunny side to try to cool it down.
- ⇒ Drink plenty of fluids but avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks.
- ⇒ Beat the heat with cool showers and baths.
- ⇒ Take regular breaks from physical activity, and avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day (between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.).
- ⇒ Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing to help keep cool.
- ⇒ Stay out of the sun as much as possible, and try to stay in an air conditioned location if possible.
- ⇒ Wear sunscreen and a ventilated hat (e.g., straw or mesh) when in the sun, even if it is cloudy.
- ⇒ Never leave children, pets or those with special needs in a parked car, even briefly. Temperatures in the car can become dangerous within a few minutes.
- ⇒ Check on neighbors, family and friends, especially those who are elderly or have special needs.
- ⇒ Conserve water and power during heat waves by turning off lights and non-essential appliances, and reducing non-essential use of water.



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 - Killing Accounts

Last month I wrote about social media platforms and dealing with them after a person dies. That led to more reading and thinking, and I ended up with an Everplans note about online accounts. I read through it with astonishment – I did not realize how many online things there are to join!

Just a few common accounts many of us have – Amazon, Ancestry, Apple, AT&T, Barnes & Noble, Comcast, ebay, Facebook, FedEx ... Yahoo, Yelp and many in between. Here is where you can go to find a link to closing all these accounts – over 230 entities:

www.everplans.com/articles/how-to-close-online-accounts-and-services-when-someone-dies

This information could be quite useful if you are an Executor / Personal Representative for someone's estate. Seems like scrolling through these names could be helpful in cleaning up our own digital lives, e.g., managing passwords, scrapping old accounts that may not be useful anymore but that are hanging around.

Everplans is a business that charges for services, not a government or educational institution site which I usually prefer to give you. But it seems to have some good stuff. The main page is www.everplans.com, then look at Resources & Guides, Planning Categories, and Digital Estate for more information than I've written.

Yes, life is still more complicated!
 Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
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Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

It's the time of year when the zucchini are beginning to be big enough to eat, and you have to be up early if you're going to stay ahead of the weeds which thrive in this weather. Hot weather hasn't done away with Covid-19. It looks like we will need to be cautious for the foreseeable future. Dealing with the unknown and keeping positive as we ride out this pandemic, is the challenge.

Lately I've had an uptick in calls from folks thinking about retiring. Those of us who worked past our 65th birthday are asking if this is a good time to give up the paycheck. Some have been furloughed because of Covid, and lost their health insurance. People in that circumstance may want to enroll in Medicare.

Social Security administers Medicare and their offices are closed but the good news is that Social Security has made signing up for Medicare a little easier during this public health emergency.

Applying online is an excellent way to start. Social Security's website has a reputation for being user friendly. To give it a try, go to www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare. If you are losing your employer's health insurance because you've been furloughed, or because you've decided to quit working, you can check the website for information on the process of signing up, but you will need to call Social Security. Our local office is in Holyoke: 877-480-4989.

If you lost your health insurance because of Covid, or because you decide to quit work, Medicare allows you to enroll now with coverage starting the first day of the next month. You will need to verify your last day of health insurance coverage. You can do this with a copy of your pay stub showing health benefits being deducted, or a statement showing health insurance premiums being paid, or a CMS L564 form which you can download from the social security website. Paperwork gets mailed (Certified mail is recommended) to the Holyoke social security office. The mailing address is 200 High Street, Holyoke MA 01040.

For questions about what Medicare costs, or to enroll in supplemental Medicare plans, or to get Rx coverage, give your senior center a call to make an appointment with a SHINE counselor.



COVID-19 Face Covering Decision Guide



Are you leaving home?

Face covering is required to be worn when you cannot maintain six feet of social distance to another person who does not live in your household. A person who cannot wear a face covering for medical reasons is not required to provide documentation.

Are you outdoors less than 6 feet away from someone who doesn't live with you?

Face covering is required to be worn.

Are you an employee or customer of grocery, pharmacy, retail, or shared transit, even if you will be more than 6 feet away from others?

Face covering is required to be worn. A business may deny service to a person who refuses to wear a mask for nonmedical reasons.

Are you at any indoor business or organization, less than 6 feet away from someone who doesn't live with you?

Face covering is required to be worn.

Minimize the use of confined spaces, elevators, control rooms, and vehicles, by more than one individual at a time.

All workers in such spaces at that same time are required to wear face coverings.

Are you alone in an elevator, inside an indoor shared common area, or other indoor enclosed area?

Face covering is recommended.

Questions?

Email: safepublicworkplacemailbox@mass.gov
or visit: mass.gov/dols

COVID-19 and the price of AGEISM

Ageism is one of the social problems made worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our ageist views of older or some might say mature adults as frail or irrelevant creates a distorted picture of how communities successfully get through crises. Using age alone to identify people as frail, thus automatically needing protection, distorts the fact that the pillars of support we rely on in our towns during this pandemic are often older.

More than ever we are learning that getting through this crisis requires building intergenerational solidarity. It's not that age is irrelevant but being compromised by chronic illnesses and comorbidities are stronger risk factors for all age groups, as are race and poverty. It flies in the face of reality to ignore the fact that many older adults in our communities are playing crucial roles in protecting others who are struggling. They are also practicing social distancing, keeping their hands clean, and wearing masks as they do so.

In many Hilltowns, those 60 and over constitute a third of the taxpayers and the bulk of the volunteers who keep town operations going. Take a look at your town committees and volunteers. How many of them continue to work to make the community safer? Do you automatically see them as frail? What a misleading image. For example, the Chesterfield Community Cupboard support team includes a range of ages, from people in their 50s to 80+. They shop, sort and store food, and keep everything clean and sanitized.

What's emerging as a major COVID-19 threat is the risks to all age groups of not taking the simple but necessary precautions: washing hands, social distancing and wearing masks. People 60 and older are not the ones driving the surges in infection rates that we are seeing. Because of their perception of risk, older people are more likely to limit their time in public and take the precautions that limit the risk of infection for everyone. Yet Dan Patrick, the lieutenant governor of Texas, suggested those over 70 "sacrifice" themselves for the good of the economy by accepting and participating in re-opening activities. It should be noted that Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and recognized as a tireless leader in getting us all through the pandemic, is not publicly referred to as the "old and frail" Dr. Fauci.

What difference does ageism make when we are all in crisis mode? Here are some thoughts from gerontological experts.

⇒ The World Health Organization identifies ageism as the last socially accepted form of prejudice... perceptions of older adults as frail and weak impacts the kind of care they receive and the health care outcomes they experience... In the U.S these perceptions are reinforced in medical training; geriatric care doesn't even appear on the list of required

training for doctors. (Nash & Schnarss, *The Conversation*, June 15, 2020).

⇒ Kate de Medeiros notes that "of all the isms, ageism is arguably the hardest to address because old age is neither a valued stage of life nor an identity many claim. The pandemic is making it worse (Aging: Covid-19. Hastings Bioethics Forum. May 14, 2020)

⇒ "In addition to the misrepresentation of COVID-19 as an 'older adult' problem, many countries have chosen to impose stricter restrictions on older adults, ordering them to remain inside during the pandemic. These restrictions exacerbate the longstanding problems of older adults' isolation and the health consequences of social disconnectedness that existed long before the pandemic. While restrictions may aim to be protective, such policies have often translated into patronizing public communications depicting all older adults as 'vulnerable members of society.'" (Age and Ageing)

Now is the time to put a new face on aging. While you're at it, put a fresh mask on. We are all in this together.

Jan Gibeau, Director
Chesterfield council on Aging



The 2020 Census is underway! It counts every living person in the USA. From August 11 to October 31, Census takers will interview homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census.

If you have not responded, you can do so by returning the mailings you should have received from the U.S. Census Bureau.

If you didn't receive your mailings, no problem! You can fill out your information over the phone with a verified Census Bureau representative at 844-330-2020. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Secretary of the Commonwealth's staff to have a conversation about Census operations at 833-621-2020.

Your community depends on your Census response for funding and representation for the next decade to come. The impact on your community include: school lunches, plans for highways, support for firefighters and families in need. Census results affect your community every day. Please respond if you haven't already done so.

**Goshen Council on Aging
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Goshen, MA 01032**

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Contract Tracing Calls—5 Things to Know

A contact tracer from your state health department might call if you've been exposed to COVID-19. But scammers are pretending to be contact tracers, too. Here's how you can spot the scam.

1. **Real contact tracers won't ask for money.** Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer or cryptocurrency.
2. **Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number.** Never share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it.
3. **Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number.** Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you.
4. **Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask.** If they do, you can bet it's a scam.
5. **Do not click on a link in a text or email.** Doing so can download malware onto your device.

Talking to a real contact tracer helps stop the spread of COVID-19. Reporting scammers helps stop them, too. Report fake contact tracers to your state and at ftc.gov/complaint.

For more information about contact tracing visit your state health department's website and ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams