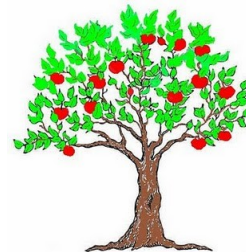


Goshen Council on Aging

September 2020 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
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Goshen, MA 01032

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Please Stay Safe, Take Care Of Yourself and Be Kind

Thank you!
♡

I would like to start by saying **thank you** to Kathy Boisvert, Henrietta Munroe and Nancy Wood for honoring the 90 plus seniors last month. Kathy did a great job writing about each of them, and all of them made up pretty bags of goodies and delivered to them. Hope they all enjoyed them.

In August I usually try to thank all our volunteers who help throughout the year. Thank you to our board members: Henrietta Munroe, Lorraine Brisson, Kathy Boisvert, Nancy Wood, and Sandy Pash, who are always there to help. Special thanks to Kristen Estelle, Roxanne Cunningham, Helen Mollison, Bill O'Riordan and Maureen Kroc. They all have helped in so many ways.

A small "**Friends Group**" has met a couple of times in the Veteran's Park, next to the parking lot, just to visit. They sit six feet apart, wear their masks, bring their own drinks and someone special brings donuts. It is usually on Monday mornings at 10am, every couple of weeks. **The next one is planned for August 24th and then September 14th.** They plan on doing it as long as the good weather lasts. If you feel safe about doing this, please come and join us. If you have questions, call Henrietta or Evelyn.

Joan is continuing to do her **muscle strengthening class on Zoom!** She still has Goshen classes on Wednesday but is offering classes from other towns on different days. Please feel free to email her with any questions and to ask how to join via zoom: joan@bybhealth.com or 413-537-8337.

New Hingham Regional Elementary School and Goshen COA sponsor and present:

Introduction to the Life of the Black Bear
By Fran Ryan

Friday, Sept. 25th, 1pm

Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating, educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting a session on **Introduction to the Life of the Black Bear** on **September 25 at 1pm.** Filmed and broadcast from New Hingham via Zoom, students from the school and older adults in the area will be linking and learning together. Thanks to a grant funded by Highland Valley Elder Services, and managed by the Chesterfield COA through a partnership with several other COAs, this program launches one of the new normal ways to connect several generations, from young to old, who now share the experience of feeling isolated. Many a grandparent is missing seeing their grandkids and kids are struggling with virtual learning.



To join this event please contact the
New Hingham Regional Elementary School:
413-296-0000.

Accessing the Goshen Public Library

Library director Martha Noblick welcomes book requests from patrons during regular library hours (Tuesday and Wednesday 3-6 pm and Saturday 11-3). Call the library at 413-268-8236, make your choice, set a pickup time, and Martha will meet you at the outside door. Please wear a mask.

Cauliflower Changed My Life *By Lorraine Brisson*

Moving to Goshen



In 1988, I started working at the VA Medical Center. I left a job as a greenhouse manager in the private sector on a Friday and started at the VAMC the following Monday, essentially doubling my income. This is when I decided it was time to buy a house. As for location, I had three criteria: 1. It had to be west of the Connecticut River, preferably in the Hilltowns, 2. I wanted to live in a town where tractors drove down main street, 3. When I told someone where I lived, most people had not heard of it. As for criteria for the property: 1. I wanted good agricultural land for a garden, 2. The house had to have a wood stove. So began my search which lasted three years. My search involved periods of looking at houses, each time realizing that I did not have enough funds to purchase anything better than a dump house that needed lots of work. So, I would stop looking and work a part time job for several months before returning to my search. To name a few: I milked cows in the evening, sometimes getting home at 10:00pm and always smelling like manure. I worked at a local garden center during the spring season. In the Fall I shucked ornamental corn.

During this three-year period, on weekends I occasionally would go for rides in the Hilltowns to explore the area and see what was for sale. Invariably, I would end up driving down West Street. Even when I made a conscious effort not to go down West Street, because I had already been there numerous times, some higher power took control of my steering wheel and there I was again. On this one day when I was feeling dejected after three years of fruitless searching, THERE IT WAS! An adorable "cute and cozy cottage" as advertised in the real estate booklet. Looking at the property, I could tell the soil was good and had been cultivated in the past. I just knew it was going to be mine.

I contacted the real estate agent and started the process of searching for financing. Things were not going well. After visiting multiple banks, including banks which provided guaranteed government loans to veterans, it became frustratingly clear that no bank was going to loan me money to buy that house. The problem? The house was too small. At 532 square feet, it did not meet the bank's minimum of 600 square feet! Who knew? Who made this stupid rule, anyway? So, I attempted to negotiate different options with the seller. The original plan was to build an addition prior to moving in. After discussion with my parents, my father, being a retired homebuilder, agreed that perhaps I could work out an arrangement with the seller to allow me to build the addition prior to purchasing the house. This went nowhere. The owner was wanting to impose too many restrictions. So, now it has been about two months and I am at the same place I was when I first contacted the real estate agent. I was so discouraged, and the realization was setting in that I might not be able to purchase the house.

At about this time, I had my annual physical. Well, things did not go too well there either. My appointment was on a Tuesday and on Friday, I was having emergency exploratory surgery. At the hospital, as I was waiting to be wheeled into the operating room, my parents informed me that they were going to go

for a ride. I thought to myself, "You're going for a ride? I might die on the operating table." Teary eyed, I wished them a nice ride and told them I would see them later. I was sitting up in bed in my hospital room when my parents walked in. After a few minutes of discussing my surgery, my parents informed me that they had met with the real estate agent. They were going to purchase the house, put the addition on and I would then purchase the house from them.

So again, I went searching for financing. One afternoon, I walked into the Boston Five Cent Bank in Northampton. As it turned out, that morning they had just received the funds from the government for a special program for first time home buyers. Normally, they receive \$300,000 to \$400,000, but that year they only received \$100,000. That would not last long. I was informed that there were several people ahead of me, but as it turned out, I was the only veteran who applied, so my name was moved to the top of the list! I received the financing, thirty days later bought the house from my parents (addition and all) and moved to Goshen.

And so, that is my story of moving to Goshen. Since then, there have been many additions and renovations to the property – second floor bedroom and bath, small barn, garage, screened in porch, kitchen, and bathroom remodel. It took many years to create my oasis and I plan to enjoy it for many more.

Happy Birthday in September!



Keith Orcutt, Andrew Bothwell, Judy Dunn,
David Mc Culloch, Lorraine Brisson,
Lauren Therkelsen, Michael Lehan, Stuart Wood,
William O'Riordan, James Dunn Helen Reynolds,
Gary Griswold, Karen Cherry, Nitza Hidalgo,
Lawrence Rowen, Charles Amo, Linda Walden,
David Sharpe, Maureen Krok, Kate Swol,
Sandra Wentzel, Brenda Roberts, Suzanne Meyer,
Theresa Healy, Mary Freund, Dianna Jablonski,
Barbara Babij, Lynn Werthamer,
Giovanna Bellesia-Contuzzi,
William Celatka, David Packard, Janet Briere,
James Wentzel, Kathleen Berrena,
Theodore Kolodziej

From Evelyn: I wish we could predict when we will be free to do what we want, but that day will not be soon enough. So, in this time I would like to know what you need or what we can do to help you. I do know that some of you do not have internet and cannot even see what is on our webpage. Please call one of us to let us know how we can assist you. I have been working on getting some books and have had a few people ask for them. We will try to work with the library to get some more books out to whoever needs them. We can do this as a curbside delivery.

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



Wow! It is already September and it is still hurricane season, which has already messed with us. With this in mind, here are a few ideas on how to prepare for any emergency.

- Have a plan on how to get out of the house in 3 minutes or less.
- Keep eyeglasses, canes, walkers, hearing aids, COVID masks near where you are sleeping
- Make sure pathways are clear of clutter.
- Install night lights (LEDs work well) throughout the house to prevent falls.
- Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the road so first responders do not have to spend crucial time finding you.
- Get and fill out a FILE OF LIFE from your Council On Aging and post it on the refrigerator.
- Know where you can seek shelter and sustenance; this pre-planning is very important during this COVID time of social distancing.

Stay strong and be SAFE!

--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, in color, 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!

What Luck...

So you know I'm a fan of checking our credit reports to make sure information is correct, that no one has absconded with our information, and as a reminder to do good financial management. The recommended practice is to check one of the three major credit bureaus every four months, so each one is checked once a year at no cost.

Well, what luck! Because of the virus we have grown to hate, the bureaus are allowing free weekly access to our reports through April of next year. If somehow you haven't been checking your reports, here you go - www.annualcreditreport.com/reviewYourReport.action. Look at each one now, dispute anything that is wrong, get it fixed, then start the annual cycle of checking.

While you are there, put a freeze on each report. That will keep unsavory people from accessing your report, stealing your information, and gaining credit or opening an account in your name. Just make very very very sure that you print out or write down the pin they give you. You will need that to thaw your report, if / when you want to be considered for credit.

Q. If I have a freeze, do I still need to check my report for correctness? Or can I just trust credit card companies and mortgage holders to always provide the right information? A. Yup. Nope.

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

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

We should be baking zucchini bread. It freezes well, and by now if we don't watch it, they can get to be the size of baseball bats.

As we enter another month of Covid, stretching resources gets to be more challenging. Families out of work, bills still needing to be paid, groceries getting more expensive- it's good that our gardens are finally producing after what seemed like a slow start. Let's hope for a late frost.

This is a reminder for folks to check out the Hilltown Mobile Farmer's Market which is in Blandford and Huntington on Friday afternoons and Worthington and Cummington on Thursday afternoons. The Market runs July 23rd to October 9th this year and accepts SNAP (food stamps) benefits, HIP (Healthy Incentive benefits as well as cash. Produce is from local farms and looks terrific. Blueberries, peaches, apples soon, tomatoes, squash, corn, kale, onions, beets, you name it, you can probably find it at the Market. If you can't get to the Market, there are volunteers who can shop for you if you call your senior center and ask. And of course, you can be one of those volunteers and shop for a senior, or someone who is having difficulty getting out...or struggling to make ends meet.



This has been an amazing time to watch the generosity of our neighbors helping neighbors. Senior centers are getting donations of food, money and time from a growing band of volunteers. The Food Pantry is in full swing in Goshen on Wednesday afternoons, and the Chesterfield Cupboard is open daily. Chesterfield's effort to help those in town who need groceries has been a real community effort, getting up and running, and now with volunteers helping to shop, stock shelves, clean and manage inventory. It has been exciting to see more families use the cupboard, and more donations come in.

Williamsburg's Take and Eat weekend meal program continues to help seniors every other weekend with a home delivered meal made by volunteers at Our Lady of the Hills, and the Williamsburg Congregational Church. If you know someone who could use a meal, or if you'd like to be a volunteer and help to continue this effort, you can give the Williamsburg Senior Center a call. The office may not be open, but the staff is still working and can be reached daily.

Here's a pitch for those of you who may not have checked out the SNAP program, also known as food stamps. You can apply online. The application process takes about 20 minutes. Don't have a

computer? Call your senior center to get help getting that application started. Benefits have been expanded. So if your income is less than \$1,777 a month for an individual, \$2,146 for a couple, \$2,514 for a family of three....you could qualify. With the price of groceries continuing to increase, this might help at the check out counter.

Meanwhile, let's bake and share zucchini bread?

2 cups of graded zucchini
3 eggs lightly beaten
1 cup salad oil
1 cup sugar
3 1/2 cups flour
2 teaspoons of vanilla
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
A pinch of salt, a pinch of cinnamon
Add raisins, chopped walnuts, if you want



Bake at 350 degrees for an hour. Makes 2 loaves.

Recipe from:

Garden Ways Zucchini Cookbook, 1977.



The 2020 Census is underway! It counts every living person in the USA. From **August 11 to September 30th**, 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.

Part-Time Work Available: Hilltown Elder Network

The HEN program needs caregivers in Williamsburg and Goshen. Help elders with housework, various household chores and transportation to appointments. Pays \$15.00 per hour. For application, call Fran Goebel at 268-7411. *The HEN program is sponsored by the Hilltown Community Development Corporation.*

Shop or Volunteer at the Hilltown Mobile Market

The Hilltown Mobile Market is an innovative collaboration to increase the availability of fresh, local, and affordable produce to Hilltown residents of Western Massachusetts. We are back for our second season in 2020! Your support during our pilot season last year resulted in increased grant funding to purchase a market vehicle and broaden our reach to more communities. From July 23rd - October 9th, the market is visiting The Maples in Worthington from 2-3:30pm on Thursdays, the Kingman Tavern in Cummington from 4:30-6pm on Thursdays, the Post Office in Blandford from 2 -3:30pm on Fridays, and the Town Green in Huntington from 4:30-6 pm on Fridays. Stop by and shop with cash, credit, debit, SNAP, WIC, or Senior FMNP Coupons! Or if you have some free time and would like to get more involved in the market, you can sign up to volunteer by visiting: tinyurl.com/HMMvolunteer or emailing Seva Tower at sevat@hilltowncdc.org.



Survey shows that Joan Griswold's Exercise Program Responds to Successes and Need for More Sessions

A recent survey of the 38 participants in Joan's classes makes it clear that the group now has several members who have been exercising with Joan for several years (38%) and another 41% who have been with the class for at least a year. New membership continues to grow with another 22% who have just started participating in the past six months. More classes have led to more frequent participation. One in 5 of the participants attend one a week, 17% twice a week and 29% three times a week.

Have the programs had an impact on their personal health? Over 60% reported that they feel a difference in their overall strength, 11% have increased energy and physical endurance, 13% more flexibility, 5% less pain exercises, while 11% not having noticed a change in their bodies. Another 14% requested a 4th class, which Joan has scheduled and started in Williamsburg on Thursdays at 10:15am. This class will be offered as an entry level class. Folks who might be interested in the class need to contact Joan (joan@bybhealth.com) to review expectations about their current health status and abilities to ensure the class is a good fit. She will also help in navigating the system for those who have not enrolled.

It's clear that the desire and commitment to exercise is consistent and growing. Joan notes that everyone, COAs and students alike, "have all worked hard to bring the current level of fitness to an incredible place".

★ **New Hingham Regional Elementary School
and Goshen COA sponsor first virtual
multigenerational program** ★

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★ on the lives and habits of wildlife,
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★ learning.



★ To join this event please contact the
★ New Hingham Regional Elementary School:
★ 413-296-0000.
★

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This Newsletter is sponsored in part by a grant from The Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Need something to celebrate?

Here are 12 lesser known holidays in September!

- 5th: National Cheese Pizza Day
- 6th: Read a Book Day
- 9th: National Teddy Bear Day
- 10th: Sewing Machine Day
- 11th: No News is Good News Day
- 12th: Chocolate Milkshake Day
- 16th: Collect Rocks Day
- 19th: International "Talk Like A Pirate Day"
- 20th: Wife Appreciation Day
- 21st: Miniature Golf Day
- 26th: National Hunting & Fishing Day
- 28th: Ask a Stupid Question Day

