

Goshen Council on Aging

March 2021 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032

Evelyn Culver, Coordinator
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St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Tuesday, March 9th 11:30-12 Pick up



It is hard to believe that it's been almost a year since the last COA St. Patrick's luncheon. For many of us it was probably the last public function we attended.

The good news is that we will still have a corned beef / cabbage luncheon but in a curbside version. We have scheduled this for March 9th, 11:30-12:00 pick up at the town hall parking area. You do not have to get out of your car as our team will bring the lunch out to you. **If you would like to order this luncheon, please call Evelyn Culver at 413-268-3316 before Wednesday March 3rd.** We will be asking for a \$5.00 donation that day. Spruce Corner Restaurant is cooking the meal; Red's Bakery is providing the dessert.

Unfortunately, we will not have the usual information and entertaining speaker provided by Bill O'Riordan. You will have to provide your own blarney this year! However, you must wear green on the 17th as we will be sending leprechauns and Irish fairies across Goshen to report back to us. Enjoy and be safe. Taisteal sábháilte!

Vaccine

Last month I mentioned that the COVID 19 vaccination rollout was changing every day and it is. We have been working with our local Board of health, answering questions and making sure that anyone over 75 has received or has an appointment to receive the vaccine. If you are having trouble getting an appointment, please give Evelyn a call:
413-268-3316.



Food Pantry

The Hilltown Food Pantry is here to help. They are able to help everyone during this pandemic in all ten hilltowns. They are hoping you will stop locally to receive some of your groceries and not go into the big box stores. Everyone is entitled to the pantry's service at this time. It is open on Wednesdays from 12pm-3pm. If you do not have a ride, they do have some volunteers to deliver. Please call 413-268-7578 on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 3:00. Diane will answer any questions or just drive up there. It is curbside and they serve out of the door on the side of town offices.

Scams

There are many scams out there. Please do not engage with any suspicious caller or visitor. The IRS will not call you or send cops after you, which are some of the crazy things scammers try to tell you.

Do not purchase gift cards to give them to any organization. This is also a scam. Vaccine shots are free. You will have to give your insurance in some cases but no money. If you receive a call about them helping you get on a list for a small cost, that is not true either. When in doubt- hang up!

Muscle Strengthening Classes

Joan is still active, offering cardio and muscle strengthening classes via zoom. She has classes on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays at 10:15 am. Goshen sponsors the Wednesday morning class and donations are accepted at any time. Send to: Goshen COA, 40 Main Street, Goshen, MA 01032. Joan2byhealth.com is Joan's email address if you are interested in joining us.



ZOOM games

We are working on a trivia game to play on zoom. If you are interested or have any ideas, please contact Evelyn.

Library News

Because our town library is closed due to Covid-19, library director Martha Noblick is offering curbside pickup. Please call 268-8236 x111, and leave your name, phone number and book title(s). Martha will gladly call you back and make arrangements for pickup.



Picks of the Month

Perestroika in Paris by Jane Smiley is a fictional story of a young boy and three animals who form a delightful friendship.

Best Beloved by Northampton author Robert Bissell is a novel that takes place the early 1920s. It revolves around a family living in Massachusetts. Its joys, trials and secrets are revealed by daughter Gwen.



Recently, Nancy Wood (COA board member) and Susan Kalentek (long-time Goshen resident now living in Easthampton) enjoyed an afternoon of cross country skiing at the DAR.

For those who wish a guided excursion, All Out

Adventure’s staff has programs at the DAR. The programs are free (donations accepted) and equipment is provided.

To ensure a spot on a guided excursion, you may call 413-584-2819 or visit **alloutadventures.org**. Enjoy winter!



St. Patrick's Day is an enchanted time – a day to begin transforming winter's dreams into summer's magic.



Happy Birthday in March!



- Mary Berube, Susan Macdonald, Paul Britt,
- Robert Bushee, Edward Connell,
- Theresa Bothwell, Denise Luczynski,
- Alison Bowen, Stanley Dewey, James Murdock,
- William Benoit, James LeBeau, Sheryl Gardner,
- Robert Raymond, Curtis Pichette,
- Michael Kurland, Lawrence Hodge,
- Sheila Myers, Maria Rooney, Thomas Vincent,
- James Vogel, John Dolven, Joe Roberts,
- Robert Emerson, David Silvia, William Sbrega,
- Brooke Schnabel, Beverly St. Amand,
- Elaine Ulman, Edward Arnold, Carol Monaghan,
- Jim Krebs, Mary Ann Korash, Lynne Paterson

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



The State Fire Marshall tells us that electrical fires are the second leading cause of fire deaths in the Commonwealth. Here are some ways to avoid an electrical fire:

- Plug major appliances like space heaters and air conditioners directly into wall outlets. Do not use extension cords or power strips.
- Charge laptops and cell phones on hard surfaces, not on soft surfaces like beds or upholstered furniture.
- Unplug any device powered by lithium-ion batteries when charged. Do not over charge them or leave them charging unattended or over night.
- Turn heating pads, electric blankets and space heaters off before sleeping.
- Learn how to deal with a fire in your microwave oven -- hint: keep the microwave door closed, turn off and unplug it if you can do so safely.
- Store batteries the way they come -- not loosely in a baggie.

Have a sweet Sugar Season and stay 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.

Regional News



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!

Big Five plus Relevant Information

Assuming you have done a Letter of Instruction following last month's suggestion, you have quite a jump on this month's item. Good on you!

I can think of three categories of Relevant Information to keep and file. One is related to taxes, you know, "keep tax records for 3 years unless something else pops up to bite you in the ahem." We go to the horse's mouth for that guidance and type in a search question, e.g., at IRS.gov, "how long do I keep tax records". I find the major tax preparing firms such as TurboTax and H & R Block have still accurate but even more useful information.

The second category of information comes from making a good bet that files related to the contents of that Letter of Instruction will be needed. This means current insurance policies, real estate deeds, bank statements, vehicle titles, tax files, warranties, contracts, and, I'm afraid, more and more. There are lots of suggestions online for organizing these, such as files for employment, financial, health, identity, insurance, real estate, and vehicle. Let me know if you want some suggestions.

The third category is personal. Family marriage, birth, and death certificates will be useful in genealogy. Some medical records could be very helpful. Records of a significant achievement may get passed on in the family. Embarrassing photos of babies will want to be available for embarrassing those adults. Well, I did say personal. You have to figure out what this means to you.

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

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

Spring officially starts, March 22nd! And the operative word, as the vaccine roll-out continues, is **patience**.



The online sign up for appointments continues to improve. There are a number of ways you can get assistance to sign up online at the state website, www.Mass.gov. Volunteers are being recruited to help, there are promises of making the website easier to navigate, and more vaccination sites continue to be opened in our area. Best way to get current information is to call your senior center where we are attempting to stay on top of developments as they happen.

The Massachusetts Scheduling Resource Line 877-211-6277 opened last month and is able to book an appointment for you. You can call and speak to a person. They are aware of availability for all sites statewide. Patience and perseverance are recommended in order to get through. All calls are free and confidential. The TTY number is 508-370-4890. Thanks to all those who helped get this much needed resource in place for those of us with limited, or no internet access.

NOTE: if you receive a phone call about the Covid-19 vaccine, know that the Board of Health, Council on Aging and others who might be volunteering to assist you **will never ask for your social security number, your credit card or bank information**. We will ask only for your name, date of birth, address, and Medicare insurance card number. There are some scammers who are using vaccine registration to get your information. **The Covid-19 vaccine is free**. If you have any concerns about the legitimacy of a phone call you receive, please hang up and call your local Board of Health or Council on Aging.

In other good news, the freeze on MassHealth benefits continues through April 24th, when the Governor will review it again. MassHealth benefits have been "frozen" since March last year. This means if you have had MassHealth, you haven't lost it, even though you may no longer be eligible. Coverage has not ended, and will remain in place until the Governor makes the decision to resume normal MassHealth processing.

Other not so good news...some of you may have received letters from MassHealth saying they will no longer be paying your Medicare B premium. You are not



alone, 1800 Massachusetts residents received this (Federal) subsidy which will end February 28th. If this has happened to you, or someone you know, you can contact your SHINE counselor for details. You will not lose your other MassHealth benefits, just the Part B subsidy. If you have questions about medical insurance, you can always contact your senior center for a SHINE appointment anytime.

Tax Assistance

Hilltown Community Development unfortunately will not be offering community tax prep assistance this year due to ongoing safety concerns for our volunteers, staff and clients.

However, Community Action Pioneer Valley is providing FREE tax assistance to clients who live in Hampshire or Franklin counties with incomes of \$31,900 or less (for a single filer). Clients will need to be able to scan and email their documents to participate this year. Those who do not have that ability are encouraged to wait until after March 1st, since Community Action is working on a possibility of a "drive through" scanning of documents. For additional information and to schedule an appointment please visit Community Action at www.communityaction.us/freetaxassistance or call 413-376-1136.

An additional resource is AARP's free online tax assistance website. There is no income limits or other restrictions for people to utilize the AARP self-prepared service.

Please note that the IRS is not accepting 2020 tax returns until February 12th this year.

AARP recently put out the following article "**Ten things to know about your 2020 tax returns**" that discusses some tax changes for 2020, what to do if you haven't received the stimulus checks, and other relevant topics:

www.aarp.org/money/taxes/info-2021/getting-ready-to-file-2020-taxes.html

Cummington Fair photos



April Judd is working on a Cummington Fair history book and is looking for photos. If you have any that you would like to include in the book, contact April: 413-268-7109, cummingtonfair@gmail.com. You can email the photos to April or she can borrow them, scan them and return them to you.



On the Go!

A hearty hello from your trip leaders, Lorraine, Barbara, Betty, Karen and Francine.



With the vaccine in view, the Friends of Northampton Seniors travel group would like to give you a brief outline of future bus trips that are being contemplated for late summer and fall of 2021. Please know nothing is written in stone and things can change.

If you'd like to share your email address with Francine so we can keep in touch, please send a short message to:

francine.frenier@gmail.com

Watch for more details in upcoming newsletters.

- ⇒ August MGM Casino
- ⇒ September Big E
- ⇒ Late September Niagara Falls, if border is open, 5 days
- ⇒ October 8-18 Colorado, 11 Days
- ⇒ Late Oct/Nov Plymouth, 400th Anniver. Program
- ⇒ December Bright Nights & Red Rose



"The barking could be boredom, fear, separation anxiety, or just wanting attention. But most likely it's because he's a dog."
—A.MimE & Life—

The time is approaching and we couldn't be more excited!



Smith Vocational Culinary students and the chefs are firing it up in the kitchen.

Check out the school website for the menu:

www.smithtec.org/culinary-arts

and look for them on Facebook and Instagram. Each post will have more details. This will be a safe, fun and delicious experience for everyone!

The Oliver Smith Restaurant drive-thru!

FIRST LETS GO OVER A FEW DETAILS TO START:

1. VERY IMPORTANT, CALL FIRST to make sure the restaurant is open that day. Our menu & schedule may vary week to week.
2. The daily menu can be found on our school website, and I will post it on Facebook & Insta, SO FOLLOW US!
3. All orders MUST be in by 10a.m!



OPENING DAY: 2 / 8 / 21
TO PLACE ORDERS CALL:
413-587-1414 x3522
KEEP AN EYE out for the rest of the IMPORTANT DETAILS!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE!

**Goshen COA
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Money Wiring



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

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

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

**Working in cooperation
with the Office of the MA
Attorney General**



Money wiring scams come in many variations. Scammers like to get paid using wire transfer services because it's fast, the money is often available within minutes, not leaving the consumer time to cancel the transaction once they realize it is a scam. The money is usually picked up in cash and in person making it hard to recover.

Remember...

- **Never wire money to claim a prize**
- **Never wire money to someone you don't know**

**Watch out for these MONEY
WIRING SCAMS**

- Lottery & sweepstakes scams
- Overpayment scams
- Relationship scams
- Mystery shopper scams
- Online purchase scams
- Apartment rental scams
- Advance fee loan scams
- Family emergency or friend-in-need scams
- IRS scams