

Goshen Council on Aging

December 2021 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032

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Happy Holidays!

(Curbside)
Holiday Luncheon



The COA Board will be serving a curbside Holiday luncheon on **December 14th** at the Goshen Town Hall from **11:30 to 12:00**. You will have a choice of roast beef dinner or a roasted chicken dinner, cooked by the Spruce Corner Restaurant. Our desserts will come from Red's Bakery. We will need your reservation by **December 7th**. Please call Evelyn at 268-3316.

Holiday Caroling

THANK YOU to those of you who called to offer to join the caroling group. The Council on Aging is excited to bring a little bit of holiday cheer to Goshen seniors. We have room for more carolers, so if you have been on the fence about joining the caroling group, please pick up that phone and call Evelyn. As mentioned in the previous issue, all levels of voices are welcome, as well as all ages.

We will be caroling on **December 9th from 4:00-6:00pm**. In the event of inclement weather, we will carol on December 10 (same time). We have invited Santa to join us. Hopefully, he can take a break from toy-making.

If you would like to be serenaded by the carolers, give us a call and make your request. We have a limited number of residences we can fit in the two-hour period, so call early. There must be a senior residing at the requested address. Call Evelyn: 268-3316.

On **December 15th**, the Northern Hilltown Consortium of Councils on Aging is offering a nice holiday performance from the Hampshire Regional High School choir. See more details in the regional section of this newsletter. It will be on Zoom. Please email Evelyn for the Zoom link: ematkc@aol.com.

We hope that some of our townspeople are enjoying their new high speed internet! The Goshen Library and the COA are planning to work together to bring help to those that need a little more education on computers or cell phones. This will be in a group, but also done individually. We should have more information in the next newsletter, or you can call Evelyn to put your name on a list for this committee to contact you.

Our condolences to Lois Bacon on the loss of her son, Paul Bacon. Paul grew up in town and was well known in the area for his businesses.



The Goshen Fire Department would like us to remind you of Knox Boxes. There are individual boxes installed on the exterior of your residence that contains a set of keys for your home and can only be accessed by a Knox box key that is secured in the Fire Department apparatus. They have proven to be an invaluable tool in allowing the department to gain safe access to homes during emergencies without causing damage to doors or windows. If you live alone or know someone who does, this is important to have. Thanks to the Senior S.A.F.E. grant, the Fire Department has a limited supply of Knox Boxes that can be loaned out to Goshen seniors. Just call the fire station and leave a message (268-7161). This is also the month that you should check your smoke and CO detectors.



Our get-well wishes are being sent to our friend Joan Griswold. She has had to slow down for a few weeks, but I know she will be back running her classes as soon as she is able. Until then she can be found on Youtube. Keep her in your thoughts.

Goshen Library News

On **Saturday, December 4th at 2:00 pm**, the library will be hosting a story time with children's Author Julie Cavacco. She is the children's librarian at the Deefield Tilton Library in Deerfield, MA.

Julie has written a series of children's books called My Worst Best Friend, which are short stories about the rewards and challenges of everyday friendships. Julie will read some of her books and will also be available for "meet and greet" and book signing. Please join us for a delightful afternoon in the Goshen Town Hall!

the 28th, let us in spirit, join in the joy and gratitude of this amazing accomplishment: 100 years as the Goshen Women's Club. Congratulations everyone!



Goshen Women's Club



Our meeting place where we enjoyed lots of delightful and fun programs, greeted new members, shared happy times, found comfort in sad moments, and, most of all, formed lasting friendships.

After much consideration, it was decided to postpone our November 28th celebration of the signing of our club's constitution in 1921 because of town Covid restrictions. We will come together in the spring! As we will not be with each other on

Happy Birthday in December!



- David Clapp, Sandra Papush, William Carter,
- Jeannine Haas, Steven Kendall,
- Doreen Skorupski, Robert Maloni,
- Patricia Wheeler, David Pesuit, Dina Raymond,
- Esther Korowski, Elizabeth Bell-Perkins,
- Nancy Burnett, Frank Krok, Nina Pinger,
- James Smith, Paul Webb, Rosemarie Clark,
- Patricia Kirouac, Diane Krok, Abigail Kingman,
- Linda Still, Robert Goss, John Skorupski,
- Grace Gibson, Wayne Eastman, John Riley,
- Marcia Shaw, Lloyd Ewing, Virginia Toner,
- Monique Bourgeois, Dwight Baghdoyan,
- Richard Richardson

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 _____

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

The holiday season is almost here and everyone is busy getting ready to celebrate them with family and friends. It is time to get all those outside lights in place. Here are some tips on how to use them safely:

Senior 
SAFE

- Be sure to use only lights rated for outdoor use.
- Consider replacing older lights with new LED lights that are cooler and use less electricity.
- Anchor securely outdoor lights and decorations against storms and wind with insulated hooks or holders.
- Do NOT overload circuits.
 - 15 amp circuits support 1,800 watts.
 - 20 amp circuits support 2,400 watts.
- Do NOT drive nails, staples or tacks through wiring insulation.
- Use electrical connection protectors to keep water out.
- Outdoor electrical decorations should be plugged into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) -- either portable or permanently installed by an electrician.
- Store the electric displays inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and to extend their life.

Celebrate the holidays SAFELY!

--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!

ROBO CALLS!!! Note 2 and last for now

I really need to find topics that are easier to write about. Frustration – it is not clear that we can do much to stop these dratted calls without making more issues. I contacted the DA's office to see if there is a review of the many listed options, e.g., commercial programs or apps. Their advice, other than not answering the phone, is to contact your phone carrier and see what they might offer. I'm on AT&T, so I started there and looked at the top three in our area, which are AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile.

All three have gone to bat to combat text and phone spams. Each has a collection of tools, many free to subscribers but not all, that let you block callers. Reviews of those apps are mixed: mostly positive but the negatives include sometimes blocking calls you want. Some require you to report each individual unwanted call or text.

Commercial programs such as RoboKiller, Nomorobo, and Hiya, are available to anyone though there are often costs. These links are a good resource for comparing programs including those from the carriers: www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-block-robocalls-and-spam-calls and www.cnet.com/tech/mobile/how-to-stop-spam-calls/

Actions –

- ⇒ Check your Do Not Call status if you didn't after Note 1, or if you get a new number.
- ⇒ Make sure your password(s) – notice the plural there? – are strong.
- ⇒ Get used to checking for voicemail after you don't answer a call you don't recognize.
- ⇒ Do check out your carrier's offerings – go to their main website and search for "spam blockers" or call your carrier.
- ⇒ Tell me if you find the magic bullet somewhere.

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

December's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth

A couple decades ago, my parents and I decided to sell our homes and buy a house big enough to live together. Dad had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's several years prior and Mom was having more difficulty taking care of him. Too many weepy long distance phone calls where she was having a bad day. It was an hour and a half drive to get to her and I was working full time. We had to have a better plan. Sometimes miracles happen. We found our new home and, despite a depressed housing market, both their condo in Vermont and my home in Chester sold in a matter of weeks. Mom and Pop moved into our new home while construction was underway, making it into a space that would work for both of us. The Chester house had sold, but I was clearing out 25 years worth of accumulated stuff. Three dumpsters later, I was able to joint them. The contractor was a saint. And with the exception of a wayward electrician who held up the sheet rocking, we kept to schedule on renovations.

For my Dad, moving back to Williamsburg worked like a time machine. This had been his home for 50 years before moving to Vermont. His short term memory was sketchy at best, but his long term memory recognized all the landmarks. It was familiar. He felt at home.

Dad had been taking Aricept which was the only Rx on the market for Alzheimer's back then. It was remarkably effective. His conversation improved, he remembered his grandchildren's names again, and better still, he remembered the punch lines for a number of jokes. But Aricept had side effects which he couldn't tolerate. He had to discontinue it and the result was profound and discouraging. He said he felt his mind slipping away. I found a Rx trial program at Southern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington. He was accepted and once a month for a year and a half we went to Bennington where he got to work with a neurologist, Dr. William Pendlebury (who became Medical Director for the University of Vermont's Memory Center) and he got to take a new Rx, not yet FDA approved, called Galantamine. While the results were not as dramatic as Aricept, it did seem to help. He was not oriented to time, but he still knew where he was (because this was his home for many years) and the greatest gift....he remained oriented to person.

I need to emphasize that every Alzheimer's journey is unique to the individual. While there are common factors, each person's experience can be different.

The Good News this month is that we are plan-

ning a series of articles for upcoming newsletters that will give suggestions, information and resources for families dealing with dementia care issues.

My Dad died of end stage Alzheimer's in 2001. Until almost the end, we were able to keep him home with support services that included a Day Program with Hawthorne Services and some home care help through Highland Valley. We were lucky. My job as a social worker meant I was familiar with a lot of the resources available for Alzheimer's patients and their family caregivers. Still....if I knew then (25 years ago) what I've learned since then....it could have been a great deal less stressful. It's not an easy journey, but it can be made less difficult if you know what help is available. Next month we'll talk about where the journey starts: getting an accurate, thorough diagnosis.

Peg Whalen presents:

Free Android Smartphone Workshop

Mon. December 13th, 2:30-5:00

Want to catch up with your grandchildren who tell you using a smartphone is simple and easy? The fact is, figuring how to use all of the features of an Android smartphone is often not obvious at all. Join us at the workshop, hang out with friends and have fun "learning the ropes".



- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Understand your phone enough to feel comfortable with using it for new tasks and activities
- Understand what you should be wary of.
- Identify ways to find out more about your phone.

Some of the issues to be covered include how to:

- Get your pictures off your phone and onto your computer
- Find and install apps
- Determine whether you can use it for banking, bill paying, accessing medical records and reaching your doctor's office or pharmacy.

Interested in coming? Please call the workshop facilitator, Peg Whalen, at **413-404-4566** or email **pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com** to register by December 10, 2021. It would be helpful to know your cell/smartphone number and your email address. You will receive a short set of questions that help the organizer prepare to make the workshop most useful for your skills and interested. * Please note: this workshop will not cover how to troubleshoot an ongoing problem with your phone or how to fix broken parts of your phone.

On the Road Again..



2022 Trip Lineup

These are some of the bus trip destinations in different stages of planning with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Contact Francine Frenier if interested or want more information by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com. More information to come in future newsletters.

⇒ *Day Trip Jan/Feb. Ice Castles* is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using hundreds of thousands of icicles hand-placed by professional ice artists. The castles include breathtaking LED-lit sculptures, frozen thrones, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and much more. Warm clothing and good footwear recommended. We make a stop for a bite to eat along the way. Date and cost to be determined. Anticipated date is a Thursday in late January/early February when the weather conditions are cold enough. Approx. cost \$110, \$10 discount if paid early. Lunch is on your own. Taking interest list NOW.

⇒ *Multi Day Oct 14-23. Nashville, Memphis & Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—10 days.* \$1,205, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available. Taking interest list NOW.

Day Trip Feb/Mar. Everett, MA. Encore Boston Harbor Casino.

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip.

Day Trip May. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip.

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT.

Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound Theater presents David.

The Road to Evaluating Dementia: What does having an evaluation involve?

By Jan Gibeau

When I wrote about my journey in living with MCI (mild cognitive impairment) in October, I mentioned that once I was worried about the changes in my memory, I arranged to have a complete evaluation to find out "What's going on". It's the first step to take to avoid living with fear and anxiety about the unknown. I thought it might be helpful to share more information about what a

thorough evaluation entails.

To begin the evaluation, your PCP (primary care provider) will take your complete medical history. It's important to bring someone with you, preferably someone who knows you well, so that all of the information is as detailed as possible and you have someone to take notes for you. It also makes it easier to focus solely on your interactions and asking questions without trying to write things down at the same time. Lastly, having a family member or someone close to you there helps to fill in the gaps and ask questions they may have, especially if they will be the ones helping you as you cope with changes as they come up. This is not the time to "go it alone" or "tough it out". It's been said that accepting help is harder than helping others but it's important to remember that the person(s) helping you needs a lot of information and support.

Tests that follow a physical exam usually include neurological tests that evaluate your balance, sensory responses, reflexes, memory and thinking skills. Based on those findings, the PCP may order brain scans, blood tests, genetic tests, and a mental health evaluation to help determine a diagnosis. There are a number of different types of dementia but it isn't easy to determine which type you have because the symptoms are often similar across the spectrum of cognitive impairments. To learn more, you may be referred to other specialists such as a neurologist, or to someone who can evaluate and treat symptoms of depression, which can also present itself at the same time. The symptoms can be very similar which makes the identification of which type of dementia is present difficult. Depression is not uncommon but often overlooked. It's important that it be considered.



Successful treatment of depression can help a great deal in reducing symptoms and improving daily life. Once treated, there is a clearer picture of who are and what other steps need to be considered. Completing all of the tests can take a few weeks depending on the results that emerge. However, it also gives you time to think about questions you may have during this period. A thorough report should be shared with you and other family or friends you want to include.

Personally, I found that the results of the evaluation answered most of my questions and it was helpful to review the probabilities of what I would face in the future. It's been over 22 years and I'm slower... but still headed in the right direction. Next month we'll provide more information about options in our region for getting an evaluation, the impact of having cognitive deficits, how it progresses and what resources are available for managing the changes that begin to unfold.

**Goshen Council on Aging
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Music and Merriment

**An Afternoon of Songs and Connection
with the Hampshire Regional
High School Chorus**

Weds. December 15th at 12:30pm



Join the Hampshire Regional High School Chorus and their director Aidan Linden via Zoom for an afternoon performance of songs ranging from holiday songs, to pop music, oldies and more! Solo and small group songs will be mixed with full group chorus songs. There will be an opportunity for Q&A with the students after the performance as well. Participants are encouraged to join the Zoom session early (by 12:25pm). **For the Zoom link, please contact your COA Director or Coordinator.**

The Cummington Fair 150 year History Book is now for sale!



It can be purchased online at www.cummingtonfair.com under online merchandise on the homepage.

The cost is \$20 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

Any questions? Email April Judd at it.cummingtonfair@gmail.com

Need a haircut? Manicure? Facial?

Smith Voc. Cosmetology Program returns **December 10th** Reserve your spot today!

Cosmetology Training Center
80 Locust St. Northampton, MA
01060-2094

Offering facials, lip waxing, make up applications, and beard trims at this time. Call (413)-587-1414 ext. 3531.

