

Goshen Council on Aging

May 2023 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032

Kerry Normandin, Coordinator
413-268-8236 x118
coa@goshen-ma.us

May Luncheon

Tuesday, May 9th at 12pm
Goshen Town Hall

Our May luncheon cooked by Jerry at Spruce Corner Restaurant will be held on May 9th at Noon (please note change in time) in the downstairs of the Goshen Town Hall. This month we will have Grilled Teriyaki Chicken or Vegetable stir fry rice, green beans, tossed salad, and rolls. We would love for you to stay and enjoy your meal with us, but we will have to-go containers available if you cannot stay. **Please contact Kerry Normandin by May 3 at 268-9354 to let her know your choice of meal.**



May 3rd: Knitting and Crafts Group

Bring knitting, crochet, drawing, needlework or any craft project. Join us on May 3rd from 1-3pm in the upstairs Dining Room at the Goshen Town Hall. All are welcome! Please contact Pat at 413-695-5503 if you have any questions.

May 5th: Community Connections Group

We will be meeting on Friday, May 5th from 10-11am in the Goshen Town Hall upstairs dining room. The COA is coordinating with the Hilltown CDC. Our guest this month will be Goshen's own Kelly Sturtevant, Reiki Master and Animal Reiki Practitioner. During this presentation we will explore energetic awareness through our senses and discuss the connection to feeling more peace and joy. We will deepen our understanding of day-to-day interactions that may leave us feeling out of balance. We will also learn a couple of simple techniques to help us tune into the wisdom of the body, returning to a state of greater balance. Feel free to bring a friend; all are welcome.

May 6th: Three Sisters Sanctuary- All ages

Gather your sons, daughters, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors for our multigenerational outing to Three Sisters Sanctuary on May 6 from 11am-1pm. Entrance fees will be paid for through a HVES grant. Meet us there for a walk through this beautiful and unique location in Goshen. A picnic lunch will also be included: Black Forest Ham or Turkey grinder, pasta salad and chips from Spruce Corner Restaurant. Please contact Kerry Normandin at coa@goshen-ma.us or **268-9354** or to sign up by May 1st.

May 9th: Technology Support

Peg Whalen continues her monthly series to assist with questions about all types of technology devices and their uses. She is available between 10am and 12pm in the upstairs dining room of the Town Hall. Please enter through the Library. **Email nhillcoastech@gmail.com or call or text Peg at 413-404-4566 in advance to schedule enough time for help with your specific needs.**

May 16th AND May 23rd: HVES Lunch

We have added another hot curbside pick up style meal based on your feedback. The HVES lunch will now be on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month, pick up from 12:00 to 12:30. On Tuesday May 16, the meal will be Spaghetti with meat sauce or Vegetarian Chili, and on May 23 the meal will be Chicken Cordon Bleu or Beef Wellington plus vegetables, milk and dessert. If you have not signed up and would like to for June, please call Kerry Normandin at **268-9354** to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$3 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.



May 17- Scott Simundza from Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program will be coming to Goshen for an informative workshop.

SMP helps consumers take a more active role in their healthcare finances by educating them on how to protect their healthcare identity, how to detect errors or fraud in their healthcare billing, and how to report billing issues to the right resources for help. We will meet in the Goshen Town Hall at 6-7pm. Seniors from all towns are invited to attend.

May 17th- Games Group

Our Games Group will be on Wednesday, May 17th from 1-3pm and continues on the third Wednesday of each month. We will meet in the upstairs dining room at the Town Hall. This will be in coordination with the Goshen Library, and the library is open right afterward.

May 4, 11, 18, and 25: Tilton Town Field Treks

Let's continue a gentle, weekly, go at your own pace walking club at our beautiful Tilton Town Fields on each Thursday in May at 1pm. Bring your own water and snack with you. It is always more fun to exercise with others. See you there!

May 12th & May 26th- Writers Workshop

New writers workshop with Goshen's own Siegfried Haug on Fridays May 12 and May 26 at the Goshen Town Hall. Residents of all towns are welcome to attend. Please see page 5 of this newsletter for details and registration. It will be great!

Our condolences to the family and friends of:

- James Wentzel, Jr.**
- Darlene Roberts**
- Brian Tennyson Sr.**



**New group starts May 25
Practical Aging Issues Support Group**

Please join us for this peer led support group with Grace Gibson and Jackie Compton. We all have wisdom and valuable life experience to share- this is a chance to learn from one another. We will have discussions and share resources about various topics including long term care, hospice, estate planning, elder care managers, and the roles of local agencies. This monthly group will meet on the **fourth Thursday of the month** in the upstairs dining room of the Goshen Town Hall from **11:30-12:30**. Masking is not required but is encouraged.

Contact Jackie:
jackiecompton2@yahoo.com, 268-7265
or Grace:
gracecgibsonphd@verizon.net, 374-4357
for more info and to indicate interest in this group.



Happy Birthday in May!

Ann Hackler, Alice Barrett, Janet Goss,
Gaye Reinhold, Susan Zuroff, John Miller,
Fenida Kandrotas, Robert Berrena Jr.,
Rosemary Bienz, Glenn Richardson,
Michaela Malinowski, Darlene Wolfe,
Diane Jones, Edward Roberts, Edward Dzenis,
Peri Hall, Russell Papineau, Mary Richardson,
William Gardner, Hermine Antelman

***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 _____

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!

Your State Representatives

State Senator Paul Mark

Email: paul.mark@masenate.gov

Phone: 413-464-5635

Mail: 773 Tyler Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:
Williamsburg Town Hall
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa

Email: Lindsay.Sabadosa@mahouse.gov

Phone: 413-270-1166.

Mail: 76 Gothic Street
Northampton, MA 01060

sun-gazing.com
INFINITY

**THEY SAY 40 IS THE NEW 30
AND 50 IS THE NEW 40, BUT ALL I
KNOW IS THE OLDER I GET, THE
MORE 9PM IS THE NEW
MIDNIGHT.**

Caregivers Part 3, Electronics

The last in this installment... like I'm writing a serialized short story here... we turn to electronics and keeping your care recipient financially safe.

Our cell phones and internet access are both a major benefit and potential bugaboo all in one! There are many ways to get into trouble but also steps to take to avoid issues. I don't have room to completely describe all the tips here so call me if you need more info.

1. **Passwords.** They should be strong, they should be unique, they should be safeguarded. PAGES have been written on managing passwords.

2. **Two-factor authentication.** This means you put in a password, then get an email or phone text with a second password which is required to continue.

3. **Privacy settings.** Require a code or photo or fingerprint to activate a device. Turn off location tracking. For GPS directions, don't use the real home address; fudge it by giving a park or address close by. On social media, read that media's instructions to learn how to limit who can see a post, meaning just close friends or the entire world.

4. **Security.** Use anti-virus software and keep it up to date. Keep the operating system up to date to take advantage of their security improvements. Activate the firewall. Learn how to erase personal data from a lost phone. Use an authenticator app that will connect to the elder's accounts and alert you when somebody tries to log on (Thanks, Peg Whalen).

If you are working with an elder with diminished capabilities, consider some of the steps that parents can take with their children to provide safety. See <https://connectsafely.org/controls/>. This will help you block an online site that the elder repeatedly accesses to order unneeded merchandise, for instance.

Take care,

Jean O'Neil

TRIAD Committee member

jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228

May's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

There may be help paying for your Medicare B premium if your income is less than \$2,734/month or less than \$3,123/month if married. Countable assets need to be less \$18,180 or \$27,260 married. This is a significant increase in the financial eligibility limits for this program, and one of the ways the State is helping residents with their health insurance costs.

We often forget about the Medicare B premium because it's deducted from our social security benefit before the remaining benefit is auto deposited in our checking account. So we never get a bill, just a reminder at the end of the year from social security saying this is your benefit, this is what we took out for your Medicare B premium. This year it's \$165/month. So if you do the math that's \$1,980 for the year. If you qualify, you get a letter from social security saying they are putting that \$165/month back in your check.

This benefit is called the Medical Savings benefit or the Senior Buy-in benefit or the MassHealth Buy-in benefit. Frustrating? Confusing enough without giving a benefit multiple names, but who am I to argue?

Better news: if your income is less than \$2,309/month, this Senior Buy-in acts like a Medex plan. Meaning, it supplements your Medicare, so when you have a doctor visit, or any medical service, Medicare pays about 80% of the bill and this Senior Buy-in pays the rest. You have no co-pays.

Why is this Good News now? It used to be that you couldn't have more than \$7,000 in countable assets, and your income had to be much lower. So many more people could qualify now and see \$165/month put back in their social security check.

Curious? You can contact a SHINE counselor through your senior center to see if you qualify.

Massachusetts will end its COVID-19 Emergency status on May 11

1. What does that mean for our residents?
The COVID-19 public health emergency in Massachusetts and the vaccine mandate for more than 40,000 state workers will both end on May 11, in conjunction with the federal government's end date for the public health emergency

2. So what happens going forward?
Three years after the onset of the pandemic, the state, and much of the world, is shifting towards treating COVID-19 less like a pandemic and more like a respiratory illness.

2. So COVID-19 is over?
No, we will continue living with COVID-19. We can now incorporate the tools to manage this virus into our standing response to respiratory illness within our communities and healthcare system.

3. No More vaccine mandates then?
Certain workers will still be subject to vaccine mandates under rules from the state Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

4. Does this mean nobody is getting COVID-19?
No, on March 30th Massachusetts health officials reported 2,023 new COVID-19 cases and 59 new deaths in the last week. So for those with weakened immune systems, masking, social distancing, hand washing, and monitoring yourself for systems remains important.

5. What should I do if I'm having symptoms?
As always, if you're not feeling well, stay home! Your local Boards of Health, through the Foothills Health District will continue to provide free COVID19 test kits as long as they're available. If symptoms are mild, use over the counter measures. If severe, feel free to reach out to your Public Health Nurse (contact info below), your Primary Care Provider, or if life threatening call 911.

FootHills Health District: Michael Archbald, RN
413-268-8408 (office)
413-522-7112 (cell)

The Regional COA Newsletter benefits from your support!

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

(Please make out your check to "Northern Hilltown Consortium/ Town of Chesterfield" and mail to: Chesterfield COA, PO Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

On the Road Again...

2023 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

*Day Trip June 20. **Encore Casino.*** Boston Harbor casino trip. **Free \$20 slot play.** Make payment to Francine Frenier for \$42 due **NOW.** *Special \$22 discount for Chesterfield seniors aged 60 and over.* Lunch on your own, options available on site. Mail to the address above.

*Day Trip July 20. **Lake George Cruise-*** Take a 2 1/2 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. The Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. Danny Lombardo performs on the keyboard. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$113. **WAIT LIST ONLY.**

*Day Trip August 10. **Garden in the Woods-*** This trip includes a walking guided tour of the Garden in the Woods in Framingham followed by a luncheon at the Longfellow's Wayside Inn. Entrée choices are Breast of chicken, Baked Salmon, or Yankee Pot Roast. Two floors of historical exhibits to explore at the inn. A stop at Hebert Candy Mansion. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$122 due **June 10th.** Mail to the address above.

*Day Trip August 23. **Saratoga Racetrack,*** Saratoga Springs, NY. This trip includes lunch at the Inn at Saratoga. Entrée choices are Chicken Normandy or Pasta a la Saratoga. After lunch, spend time at the racetrack in our reserved grandstand seats. Over 60 concession stands on the grounds. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$130 due **June 10th.** Mail to the address above.

*Multi Day Trip September 10-12. **Nantucket Island.*** Three days to two nights. Includes ferry to and from the island, guided tour of the island and all access pass to historical sites. Make payment to First Choice for \$748 p/p double occupancy due **June 21st.** Mail to the address above.

*Day Trip September 14. **Lake Sunapee Luncheon Cruise- Vermont Country Store.*** A two hour luncheon cruise on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. This trip includes Luncheon buffet and a stop at the Vermont Country Store. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$111 due **July 10th.** Mail to the address above.

*Multi Day Trip September 29-October 9, 2023. **Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse - S. Dakota & Devils Tower - Wyoming.*** 11 days. Stops at Corn Palace, Wall Drug, National Museum of Great Lakes, Iowa Museum of Natural History, Des Moines Art Center, and Eck Visitors Center at

Univ. of Notre Dame. Cost \$1,178. \$25 discount if paid in full by **June 22, 2023.** Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

*Day Trip November 4. **Elvis- A Musical Revolution- North Shore Theater.*** An exciting musical in Beverly, MA where you will hear 40 of Elvis' hits. Lunch at Danversport Yacht Club included. Make payment to First Choice for \$259 by **July 21st.** Mail to the address above. A few seats available.



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Free delivery to a pick up location near you and door delivery service available for a small fee

Check us out at:

www.hilltownmobilemarket.com

Writers Workshop in Goshen

If you have ever been told: "You really should write that down!" you might consider this workshop. It will be taught by a local writer and former psychologist who knows how paralyzing apprehension can be. We will do easy exercises to get past our reluctance to commit thoughts to paper. And we will select stories that offend nobody and bring smiles to our readers' faces.



This class will start with two sessions in May with the option to continue. People from all towns are encouraged to attend. It will be held at the Goshen Town Hall at 42 Main Street, in the upstairs dining room. The classes will be on two Fridays: May 12 and May 26 from 1pm-2:30pm. Please call or email Kerry Normandin (**268-8236 x118** or **coa@goshen-ma.us**) by May 8 to register for this great workshop.

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

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

Elder Law Education Program - 2023

Local seniors can learn about elder law issues at a free event (in person) hosted by the Williamsburg Senior Center on **May 17th at 3:00 pm at the Town Office building, 141 Main St., Haydenville.** The presentation is part of the statewide Elder Law Education Program sponsored by the Massachusetts Bar Association.

Among the topics this year are Veteran's Affairs Financial Benefits, how to protect your home and assets, power of attorney and health care proxies, reverse mortgages, Homestead and Life Estates, Medicare/Medicaid changes, and alternatives to nursing home care.



Please register in advance for this event by calling the senior center at **413-268-8410** or emailing seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org.

ATTENTION MASSHEALTH CONSUMERS

If you receive MassHealth you may have noticed that since March 2020 you haven't gotten a recertification review. These are usually sent out every year to recertify your eligibility for MassHealth. Covid changed that. Anyone who was on MassHealth before March 2020 did not lose benefits during the Public Health Emergency. This coverage protection ended April 1st 2023. MassHealth has begun to review eligibility for over a million MassHealth members. If you have MassHealth you will be receiving a Big Blue envelope with a recertification application and letter explaining how to fill it out and return it. Until this happens, your MassHealth coverage will remain in place.



MassHealth expects to take a year getting everyone recertified. So you may receive your Big Blue envelope next month, or in October, or next February. Until then, your coverage remains in place. If you have questions when you get your Big Blue envelope, you can call your senior center to speak with a SHINE counselor.