

Goshen Council on Aging

October 2025 Newsletter



Goshen Council on Aging
40 Main Street
Goshen, MA 01032

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

Foliage Ride & Picnic

Friday, October 3rd at 11:30am

Mt. Sugarloaf State Reservation (meet at town parking lot)



We are hoping the foliage will be beautiful! We have arranged to have the Easy Ride Van drive those who would like a ride, or you can choose to meet us there. We plan to have a picnic lunch at the top at 12:30. There are trails to hike from the bottom if you would like, or take a drive to the top and walk some trails from there. The van will leave the Goshen Town Parking Lot at 11:30, and Kerry needs to know if you would like to ride on the van by September 26. If you plan to drive yourself, please also let Kerry know so we have enough food for the picnic.

Oct. 1- Crafts Group. We will meet in the Library at the Goshen Town Hall from 2-4 pm. Feel free to bring whatever project you are working on; it is fun to create together! If you have any ideas for a holiday craft you would like to try, let us know.

Oct. 3 Community Connections Group from 10-11am - Jennifer O'Connell will be our presenter and she will complete a Sound Healing session with us. Jennifer uses crystal bowls and chimes to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and help the body enter a restorative state. If you have not yet tried this type of class, please join us. It is a very unique and restful experience. We will meet downstairs in the Town Hall.

Oct. 14- Our monthly luncheon will be a festive one! Martha and the Strummers, a thirteen piece ukulele band that includes several Goshen residents, will entertain us after lunch. They came last year and had people dancing in the aisles with their lively music.

Our lunch will be catered by Spruce Corner Restaurant and we will have teriyaki chicken, vegetable fried rice, vegetables and a salad. We will also serve a festive and delicious dessert. Please wear your Hawaiian shirts or colorful clothing to make this a fun day. Please call Kerry Normandin at 268-9354 by Oct. 6 to sign up. Suggested five dollar donation appreciated.

Oct. 15- Games Group- 2-4pm. Come and join our group for a fun afternoon, we have some games but if you would like to play something else, bring your game along. We are always open to new ideas! We will meet in the library.

Oct. 16- Technology Help- Goshen's own Stephen Morley will provide drop in help for your technology questions! Stephen will be in the Library from 12-2 on the third Thursday of the month. We are so grateful for his willingness to volunteer his time and talent.

Oct. 21 from 12:30-1:30 **come meet our new Public Health Nurse** for the Foothills Health District, **Lily Stafford** RN, BSN. She plans to visit the Goshen COA monthly and can do blood pressure checks, answer health questions, referral questions, and connect you to resources. Goshen Town Hall.

Oct. 21 and 28 - HVES lunch- The HVES lunch is on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month with pick up from the Goshen Town Hall from 12:30 to 1:00. The meal choices on October 21 are Chicken and Vegetable Soup or Turkey and gravy, and on Oct. 28 the meal choices are Chicken and White Bean Chili or Spinach and Cheese Quiche. The meals also include milk, vegetables, and a dessert. If you have not signed up and would like to, please call Kerry Normandin at 268-9354 to fill out a brief intake form. There is a suggested \$4 donation that is given to Highland Valley Elder Services to offset the cost of the meal.

Oct. 25 is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day from 10am-2pm. Folks can bring any unwanted or expired medication to one of several drop sites around Hampshire and Franklin Counties. The DA's Office is finalizing a list of locations, but you may call any local Police Department to find out if they are participating and where their collection site will be.

Oct. 31- Halloween! The Council on Aging is planning on decorating a car and handing out treats at the Goshen Trunk or Treat Event this year. Please join us in the town parking lot and help us hand out treats to the ghosts, goblins, and other trick or treaters. This is a fun community event! Come dressed in your favorite Halloween costume or just fall colors to add to the festivities!

Foot Clinics with Piper Sagan - Goshen residents are able to sign up for this service of medically based foot care through the COA in Cummington (634-2262) or Williamsburg (268-8407). Appointments include assessment of foot structure, health of the skin, toenails, and circulation. Nails are clipped and filed, dystrophic nails are thinned, and painful calluses are reduced. Recognizing the importance of this service, the Goshen COA will pay 10 dollars towards the \$50 fee. Piper also does home visits for \$80, contact her directly at 413-522-8432 for in home service.

**Save the Date:
Vaccine Clinic in Goshen on
Wednesday, November 19th!**



Reach out to our Community Connector!

Do you need help finding resources in the area? Please reach out to our Community Connector, Jen O'Connell. Jen can help with many issues, including:

- obtaining benefits such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security.
- Finding resources so you can continue to live independently at home.
- Programs for home repairs & transportation assistance.

Jen can be reached at **413-296-4536 ext. 110** or **communityconnectjo@gmail.com**

Caroline Solan is our SHINE Coordinator and can answer all your Medicare/Advantage plan health insurance questions. She is available in person on Wednesdays at Highland Valley Elder Services. You can also call HVES at **413-586-2000** and leave her a message or book an appointment. Additionally, her email is: **csolan@lifepathma.org**

Happy Birthday in October!

Trevor Murphy, Beverly Thomas, Elizabeth Chevalier, Laurie Frye, Deborah Lucia, Barbara Curran, Robert Lebeau, Robert Mimitz Jr., Anita Thompson, Jacqueline Cochran, Robert Labrie, Audrey Bissell, Nancy Doyle, John Otis, Judith Dolven, Laura Barrus, Jeffrey Gagnon, Laurie Cranston, Jamie Smith, Joanne Arnold, Georgia McCarthy, Michael Duquette, Jane McGrath, Eileen Torchioheidemann, Timothy Pease, Daniel Desnoyers, Suzanne Krebs, Richard Briere, Barbara Regan, Dennis Luczynski, Alan Kirouac, Julie Hood, Jane Larson, Karen Difrancia, Barbara Batrano, John Citro, Agnes Ciminera, Donna Dyer, John Schwaiger, David Mollison, John Bienz, Rene Senecal



***The Goshen Council on Aging 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 make out your check to "Goshen Council of Aging" and write "Program Support Fund" in the memo line; mail to Goshen COA, 40 Main St. Goshen, MA 01032.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Regional News



STOLEN IDENTITY! HOW DO WE KNOW?

You may have read about the recent, very large hack by China of many US government and corporate computer systems, and possible exposure of our data via the DOGE effort. Because we are now so digital, no one is totally safe from being hurt by an identity theft. If our identity is stolen, it is Really Irritating and causes a Lot of Bother to fix. Even worse, of course, there may be horrid financial consequences.

So how do we know if our identity has been stolen or even just messed with? Here are some ways to ferret out if your identity has been compromised in some way.

- Your credit report shows activity you didn't authorize or initiate.
- Someone has opened a credit card account, or started charging medical bills to you.
- Perhaps your credit score drops without apparent reason.
- You get a message from your bank that something is wrong. Or when you get your bank statement, you find that an expected deposit has not been made or a very small withdrawal has been made that you don't recognize. (This could be a test on their part.)
- You receive a bill for something you did not buy.
- You receive merchandise you didn't order, again a test on their part. You have automatic bill paying set up and all of a sudden that action is denied.
- Your tax return or payment is rejected.
- There is increased spam on your phone, perhaps calls about suspended benefits such as VA or Social Security.
- You realize mail has stopped coming to you.

A good online resource page for us is
<https://www.usa.gov/identity-theft>

Stay safe!!

Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228

GOOD NEWS FOR OCTOBER 2025

By Deb Hollingworth

OpenEnrollment time again for folks who have Medicare! DO YOU NEED TO BOTHER?
October 15th - December 7th every year is our opportunity to review our health insurance coverage.

You can stop reading here

- IF you are still working and covered through your employer or through your spouse who is still working OR
- IF you get your health insurance through your retirement pension OR
- IF you use the VA because you're a veteran

IF you don't have any of those options, then it's a good idea to review coverage during Open Enrollment. Why? Because annually Medicare plans change their monthly premiums, change co-pays for medical treatment(s) and change co-pays for prescriptions. Especially co-pays and premiums for prescriptions Medicare D plans.

This year Rx coverage might be less expensive through a Medicare Advantage plan. While I'm cautious about recommending Advantage plans because of all their copays for medical services, and because you have to get referrals, and in some cases, approval for certain treatments and because not all doctors (especially here in the hilltowns) will accept some Advantage plans, it's looking like this year some Advantage plans may do a better job covering your Rx. It depends on your prescriptions. This is why it's a good idea to have your prescriptions list reviewed by a SHINE counselor.

Keep reading on the next page for more information on Medicare Open Enrollment from the Assistant Director of the SHINE Program at LifePath.

MEDICARE KICKS OFF OPEN ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 15TH, ARE YOU READY?

By Kyra DeCarlo, Assistant Director, SHINE Program at Life Path

The Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period (OEP/AEP), takes place each year from October 15th to December 7th, for plans starting January 1. Keep an eye on your mail for important plan change information. Your opportunity to change plans for 2026 ends December 7th!

During September and early October, your current Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO, PPO, POS) with Part D drug coverage sends you information about changes to your coverage in 2026. This document is the Annual Notice of Change. This information allows you to make an informed decision about either keeping your current coverage or making a change.

The Open Enrollment period is your opportunity to re-evaluate your current plan and compare it to other available options. By comparing your options you may find a plan that offers you better coverage or saves you money. If you are happy with your current coverage and it still meets your needs, you don't have to make any changes.

Plans automatically renew for 2026. However, it is important to be aware of any changes to premiums, deductibles, cost sharing, provider networks, covered prescription, drug restrictions, etc.

If you do not review your plan and make changes during this time, SHINE counselors can still review coverage with you after Open Enrollment. To help you switch mid-year, we try to find a Special enrollment period option, but you may have to wait until the next Open Enrollment Period to make changes.

During Annual Open Enrollment Medicare beneficiaries can make the following changes to their health and prescription drug coverage for the following year:

- Enroll in or review and switch your Medicare Prescription drug plan
- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan
- Switch from one Advantage plan to another
- If you are already in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can use the Open Enrollment to switch back to Original Medicare with a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan and add a Supplemental Medigap Plan.

The SHINE program, Medicare Health Insurance Counseling Program, provides confidential and unbiased health insurance counseling for Medicare beneficiaries. This is a free service, though contributions are welcome and will go a long way to help support this vital program.

For assistance with any Medicare issue, reach out to SHINE. **Contact Highland Valley Elder Services at 586-2000** to book an appointment with SHINE counselor Caroline Solan. If all her appointments are booked up through December 7th, call Life Path which is the **Regional SHINE office in Greenfield: 413-773-5555 ext 1220**. If they get completely booked up for appointments, you might try the **Pharmacy Outreach Project at 866-633-1617**. And if you still can't get an appointment, call your senior center to get the latest information on how SHINE is handling the possible overload of Open Enrollment calls.

Your Community Connector

Jennifer O'Connell is working for the Hilltown COAs as the Community Connector. She is available to help Hilltown residents that are experiencing challenges, hardship and/or need assistance.

Jennifer can help you meet a variety of your needs to make life easier.

Some examples are:

- Obtaining benefits such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security, etc.
- Getting help so you can continue living independently at home
- Arranging for repairs
- Connecting to local groups / activities to prevent isolation and have fun with other community members
- Transportation assistance
- Being unsure of what you need or where to turn

Any and all inquiries are welcome. Call Jennifer at **413-296-4536 ext.110** or email **communityconnectjo@gmail.com**

On the Road Again... TRIPS IN 2025



**Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat
BEFORE mailing payments.**

For more info call 413-296-4291

Email: **francine.frenier@gmail.com**

Mail to: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096

Day Trip Dec. 7, Sunday

A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA

Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza -- 100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at the Chateau Restaurant. Price \$160. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by October 13. Call or email above to be added to the **Wait List**.

Hamilton at the Bushnell on Wednesday, November 12 with the Holyoke Senior Center. Call 413-322-5625 for more information. Tickets are going fast.

There are day trips to Radio City Rockettes, Craft Festival at Mohegan, NYC on your own -- all leaving from Chicopee. If interested, call 413-296-4291 or 413-593-3939 for more information.

******* 2026 Multi Day trips to Washington DC and Mackinac Island *******

Multi Day Trip April 17-21 2026

Washington DC 5 days, 4 nights Visit or tour George Washington Mount Vernon Estate, Garden & Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Smithsonian Institution, Capitol Building, World War II Memorial and more. Price \$790. Take a \$25 discount if paid in full by January 26, 2026. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above.

No money is due until early January.

Multi Day Trip Sept. 27- Oct. 3 2026, Mackinac Island, the quaint Michigan island where no vehicles are allowed. Trip is for 7 days, 6 nights. Tour the island by horse & carriage, cruise the Soo Locks, visit Bronner's Christmas Wonderland, Frankenmuth Bavarian Village and much more, not to mention the plentiful fudge shops. Price \$959. Take a \$25 discount if paid in full by June 27, 2026. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above.

No money is due until next year.

**Day trips for 2026 being planned:
Isle of Shoals Cruise and Clam Bake,
FDR Homestead & Library and
Hudson River Cruise.**

TECHNOLOGY HELP FOR OCTOBER



TechConnect 2.0 is providing free services through a partnership with Northampton Open Media. We offer free devices, drop-ins and one-on-one tech support. Please take advantage of ongoing services.

Internet Hotspots

If you need affordable internet access, we have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are free prepaid cellular devices used to access internet in most areas in the hilltowns. To learn more please contact us by phone or email. (see contact below)

Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment at **coaTechHelp@gmail.com** phone call or text msg **413-296-5080**. You also may attend drop-in at any location.

Devices for you

PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads
There is still time to join the Digital World while supplies last. If you need a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device please contact us. Call and leave a message or use the online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Tech Support Drop in Centers:

(no appointment needed)

Chesterfield Community Center

Weekly on all Tuesdays, 11:00 to 2:00

Cummington Community House, 10 to Noon,
2nd Wednesday 10/8

Goshen Town Hall, 12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 10/16
Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 5:30 to 7:30, 3rd
Thursday 10/16

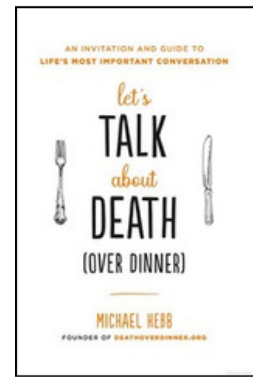
Westhampton Library, 2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday
10/23

Williamsburg

Meekins Library, 10 to Noon 2nd Tuesday, 10/14

Nash Hill Place (Resident onl), 10:00 to Noon, 2nd
Tuesday, 10/14

Worthington COA office – call COA for date/time



"Given the right framing, a "difficult" conversation does not need to be difficult. It can be liberating. It can even be transformative,"
~Michael Hebb.

Death Doula Stacey Mackowiak will lead us through a "guided conversation that transforms a seemingly difficult conversation into one of deep engagement, insight, and empowerment."

A discussion series around the book "Let's Talk about Death over Dinner," by Michael Hebb, will be offered at the Cummington Community House in October and November.

Michael's book will be provided at an introductory session on Thursday October 16 from 4-5pm. On Thursdays November 6 and 13 two dinners will be held from 4-6:30pm to share our thoughts on questions posed in the book. Participation is limited to 15 individuals. Please RSVP with Polly at **pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us** or call **413-212-1581**.

All individuals in the 7 COA consortium hilltowns are welcome to participate. (Williamsburg, Goshen, Cummington, Plainfield, Worthington, Chesterfield, and Westhampton).

This is an event funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Council on Aging (MCOA)



**GOSHEN COUNCIL ON AGING
TOWN OF GOSHEN
40 MAIN STREET
GOSHEN, MA 01032**

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Scam Alert!



*If someone knocks on your door saying they have “leftover asphalt” and they offer to pave, repair, or seal your driveway today, **it’s a scam!***

- Resist the pressure to act quickly even if it sounds like a good deal.
- Get a written contract even for small repair projects.
- Never pay for the entire project up front.
- Get at least 3 written estimates before hiring someone to do work at your home.
- Report suspicious paving crews to police.

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**

