# Goshen Council on Aging

## November 2026 Newsletter



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

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

## Thanksgiving & Veterans Luncheon

*Tuesday, November 10 at 12pm*
*John James Memorial Hall, 42 Main St.*

Please join our monthly luncheon, which will be both Patriotic and Thanksgiving themed! We will have our lunch catered by Smithsonian Café and Catering in West Hatfield, MA. Chef Peter Langlois will provide turkey, stuffing, butternut squash, and rolls for our feast. We will also have a delicious dessert from Ashley's Bakery Box.

In honor of Veterans Day, we will hold a special Quilts of Service presentation. Suzanne Ashe, Proprietor of Sue's Quilt Studio, Grafton, VT, started making the Quilts of Service in 2010. Assisting her, a half dozen volunteer quilters spend one day a month at the studio cutting and sewing patriotic themed fabric, donated by Sue's Quilt Studio. The volunteers produce thirty quilts per year. To date, approximately five hundred quilts have been presented to veterans in appreciation of their service. Sue travels to a variety of locations throughout Vermont and Massachusetts. She is honored to present her quilts to Goshen veterans at the luncheon. Director of Veterans Services, Dan Nye, will also be there to educate us on community services for Veterans. Please contact Kerry by Nov. 2 to let her know you are joining us. Suggested donation to the COA of $5 is greatly appreciated.



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**Nov. 4- Games Group** -We will all meet in the library from 2-4pm and decide which game to play. Did you know that playing board games helps improve memory, protect against cognitive decline, reduce loneliness, and boost overall emotional well-being? And it is fun! Please join us.

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## *Sharing and Caring - A Memory Cafe*

*2nd Meeting November 5 and continuing monthly*

If you or someone you care about has changes in memory that have made it hard to do the things you enjoy and you would like to meet others who understand memory loss, come to this supportive social group. "Sharing and Caring" is run by two local speech-language pathologists who provide education, strategies, and support to participants. The group meets every first Thursday of the month at Goshen Town Hall from 1:00-2:30 pm to connect over afternoon activities and refreshments. Skilled facilitators will be available to help participants with Dementia and Mild Cognitive Impairment as they engage in the group.

This month we will have a focus on food- we will talk about the MIND diet for neurodegenerative delay and also how to breakdown recipes to make them more accessible. Are you interested? Reach out to Kerry Normandin at the Goshen COA at 413-268-8236 x 118 or coa@goshen-ma.us to learn more and register.

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**Nov. 6- Community Connections**- 10-11 am in the Goshen Town Hall second floor dining room. We had to cancel sound healing last month so we will try again! Jennifer O'Connell has been using sound therapy to help people quiet their minds and heal their bodies. Sound healing has been proven to lower cortisol, heart rate, and blood pressure. It also reduces stress, grief, and anxiety. Jennifer will talk with us about her use of Solfeggio Scale tuning forks to address emotional suffering and physical ailments. Come and learn about and experience this ancient healing art. All are welcome!

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**Nov. 17 and 24- HVES grab and go lunches** - HVES delivers meals to Goshen COA. Participants pick up their hot lunch at the Goshen Town Hall from 12:30-1:00pm. The lunch for Nov. 17 is roast chicken or eggplant parmesan and for Nov. 24 it is orange/cranberry glazed chicken or butternut quiche. The meals also include milk, vegetables, and dessert. There is a suggested $4 donation given to Highland Valley to offset the cost of the meal. Please call Kerry at 268-9354 if you would like to sign up to get these nutritious and delicious meals. We would love to increase participation in this program!



**Nov. 18- Crafts Group** from 2-4pm in the upstairs dining room. Each month we will plan to create something unique together. Of course, you are always welcome to join us and work on your own individual craft project as well. For November, we will supply everything you need to create a beautiful Christmas wreath or swag for decorating your home. All materials will be provided by the COA. If you would like to make a wreath, please contact Kerry or any COA member to sign up by Nov. 11 so we have enough supplies.



**Nov. 19- Technology Help** in the Library will be available from 12-2pm. You can ask questions regarding your computer, your phone, your tablet or any other technology related question and we will do our best to help. The Tech Connect page of this newsletter also has information about other technology related services.

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## BINGO!



***Sunday, Nov. 8th from 1:30- 3:30PM***
***(doors open at 12:30)***

*John James Memorial Hall, 42 Main St. Goshen*

Join us for BINGO- a fundraiser for Goshen Community Park! Registration is $20 per person, twelve and under- FREE. Participants receive ten games of Bingo and a door prize ticket. Additional bingo card sets available for $5 and daubers for $1. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. for raffle ticket sales. Sponsored by the Goshen Open Space Committee. Prizes include maple syrup, paintings, quilts, wood crafts, embroidery, woven blankets, baked goods, gift cards from local vendors and much more.

All proceeds benefit the Goshen Community Park project. To pre-register or for questions: call Lorraine: 413-270-0208 or email: lorrainebrisson@verizon.net Walk-ins welcome.

***Winter Weather: Please be aware that if the Hampshire Regional School District is closed, the COA programming that day will be canceled.***

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Our condolences to the friends and family of:

***Gregory Roberts***
***Richard Richardson***



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Save the Date: **Carol Sing** at the Goshen Congregational Church, **Sunday, December 13** at 3pm. All welcome! Refreshments served.

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Goshen seniors welcome to sign up: **Learn about Medical Alert Devices/Systems Presentation** by Charlie Hayes, Social Service Program Manager at the Hilltown CDC on **Tuesday, November 3, 11:30am-1pm,** Cummington Community House dining room with lunch provided by Alice's Kitchen. Registration is required by contacting the Cummington COA by Oct. 30: **413-634-2262**, option 8; or email **croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov**

## Happy Birthday in November!



Judith O'Brien, John Woodward Jr.,
Barbara Richardson, Christina Barrett,
Gloria McCormick, Angela Vincent,
James Barrett, Gregory Hayes, Richard Still Jr.,
Nancy Kosior, Paula Pedersen, Marla Gale,
James Lyons, David Verge, David Guido,
Donna Kolodziej, John Wallace, Jo-Ann Holman,
Kathleen Roberts, Karen Stevens, Kerri Baldwin,
Tammy Lyons, Nancy Wood, Alan Carr,
Susan Harry, Thomas Wartenberg, Kathryn Boisvert,
Robert Adamites, Maria Arrubla, Jacqueline Cichy,
Donna Polwrek, Leonard Szarkowski, Karen Cichy,
Scott Heidemann, Bradley Howe, Joel Carr,
Richard Nadeau, Janet Nadeau, Deborah Senecal,
Marya Zilberberg, Lynda Constantilos

***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

## Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Most of the rechargeable batteries we use everyday are lithium-ion batteries. They power cell phones, laptops, power tools, e-bikes, scooters, and many other devices. When used incorrectly or damaged, they can overheat, start a fire, or even explode.

Here are a few ways to stay safe:

- Look for products tested and listed by UL, ETL, or CSA. You can find these safety insignias on the product label or packaging.
- Always use the charging cord that came with your product.
- If you lose a charger, purchase a replacement from the manufacturer.
- Charge batteries on a hard, flat surface, away from anything that can burn.
- Never charge batteries on a bed, couch, or other soft surface.
- Charge larger devices, such as e-bikes and scooters, outside when possible.
- Keep charging devices away from exits and doorways so a fire does not block your way out.

A few simple precautions can help prevent a lithium-ion battery fire.

Have a S.A.F.E. charge!

Capt. Steve Estelle,
SAFE Educator
Goshen Fire Department

## TECH CONNECT
SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS

## TECH HELP FOR NOVEMBER

TechConnect will be offering **Q&A style classes this fall on the second Tuesday of each month** at the Chesterfield COA Community Center. Bring your questions and contributions to our roundtable discussion. Hosted by Lizzy Canady from 1-2pm on the following dates:

11/10/2026: Medical Portals, taught by Peg Whalen
12/8/2026: Artificial Intelligence: Trends& Topics

**No registration necessary.**

**Tech Support home visit is available by appt.** Call or message 413-296-5080 to arrange a home visit.

**Devices for you: Refurbished PC laptops**
We have free refurbished laptops while supplies last. Please call 413-296-5080 and leave us a message if you are interested. If you received a device from us and are not using it, please call us to arrange a return so someone else can use it.

**Drop-in Centers** *(no appointment needed)*
Sites open to residents of all towns
(except Nash Hill location)

Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.
Weekly on Every Tuesday from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from 12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday this month, 11/19

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from 2:00 to 4:00, 3rd Thursday this month, 11/19

Williamsburg
**Meekins Library** Drop-In tech support (call library for latest information) 413-268-7472

**Nash Hill Place** Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 11/10

Worthington tech support - contact Eileen Daneri eadaneri@gmail.com

# GOOD NEWS FOR NOVEMBER 2026

**By Deb Hollingworth**

Here we are in November, the middle of Open Enrollment for Medicare plans. At the risk of beating a dead horse- because you've probably heard enough about Open Enrollment- here's a review of your options, and reasons you might want to check them out.

My first question is:
"What coverage do you have now?"
My next question is:
"How is that working for you?"

If you're happy with your current coverage, and you haven't received any letters from your insurance provider saying there would be changes, you can sit tight this year.

If you want to check to see if there will be changes to your RX co-pays next year, you can go online at **Medicare.gov**, or speak with a SHINE counselor. Use the online Plan Finder to check out prices for 2027. The Plan Finder looks at RX co-pays for both Advantage plans well as stand alone Medicare D plans. You can also see Plan details for Advantage Plan co-pays for medical services.

There are a number of reasons why this might be important: it could be a change in medical conditions, a new diagnosis, or a new Rx that you need to take. And this year, those of you who received a letter from BlueCross about changes in their HMO and PPO plans should look at options to change coverage.

Options during Open Enrollment:

1. You can dis-enroll in your Advantage plan by enrolling in a medicare D plan. (This will automatically end your Advantage plan as of January 1 when your D plan becomes effective)

2. You can enroll in a different Advantage plan.

3. You can go back to original Medicare when you enroll in a D plan.

4. If you go back to original Medicare with a stand alone D plan, you can pick up a Supplement plan (like Medex) anytime during the year.

Remember that these changes we make now during Open Enrollment take effect January 1, 2027.

Questions?....

1. You can call Highland Valley 586-2000 to make an in-person appointment with Caroline Solan, our SHINE counselor for the hilltowns.
2. Phone Lifepath, in Greenfield 413-773-5555. Lifepath is our Regional SHINE office.
3. Call the Medicare help line 800-633-4227. Please excuse the typo in last month's Newsletter!
4. For help with BlueCross changes, you might start with the customer service number on the back of your card.
5. Call your senior center.

## BOARDS OF HEALTH ARE ASKING YOU TO SHARE YOUR OPINIONS & EXPERIENCES

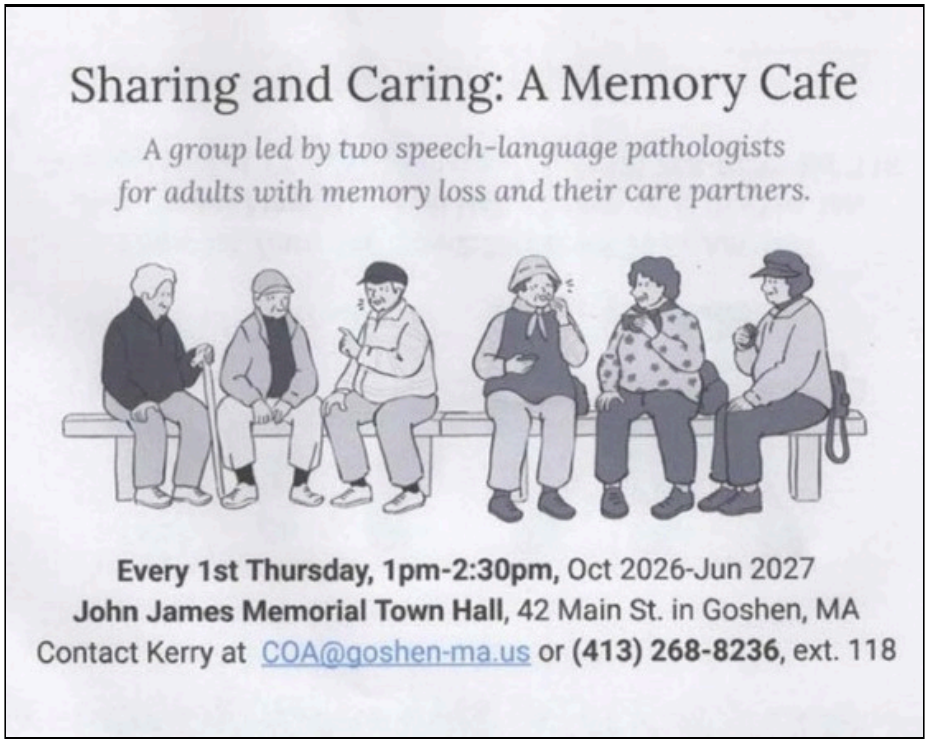
Here is a chance to share your opinion and play a role in shaping state policy and funding. The Hilltown CDC and your board of health are working to get people in the Hilltowns to complete the MA Department of Public Health's Health Equity Survey. Health equity recognizes that people do not all start with the same resources or face the same barriers to good health. Achieving health equity means identifying and addressing these conditions, like differences in income, disability, and other socioeconomic characteristics. These conditions can prevent rural people and communities from attaining good health.

Answering the questions is an easy way to bring programming and funding into our communities. This is the first of many resources DPH will be sending to rural hilltowns, so let's have a voice! The time to participate is now.. The survey is open until the end of November. This is an opportunity to support both health and community residents in need of a little extra. You will find the survey here: **Mass.gov/HealthSurvey** , or go to Mass.gov and search for "DPH Community Health Equity Survey." Your voice matters; make it loud and clear.










**CORRECTION:**

The October Newsletter incorrectly identified the Plainfield Fire Chief.

The current Chief is Robert Shearer.

Our apologies for the error.

## Losing Hilltown Landlines

by Peg Whalen

Early in September, current Verizon phone and DSL customers received a six-page letter. Many hilltown customers found it confusing and, understandably, feel concerned. I want to explain why Verizon is making this change, clarify what the letter actually says, and answer some common questions.

**WHY IS THIS CHANGE HAPPENING?**

What drives this change? Increasing costs and decreasing profits. Verizon has to make costly repairs and replace copper wires because their coverings age, stretch, crack, and break. Copper theft is increasing. Maintaining outdated wires for less households doesn't make financial sense.

**WHAT DOES THE LETTER REALLY SAY?**

Customers first see the words "What's Changing and When" and the date "November 30, 2026." **What will actually happen to you on November 30, 2026?** Nothing! That date simply marks the day Verizon told the FCC it wants to discontinue service. It is simply Verizon's request, not a final decision. Verizon cannot disconnect your service without required approval. The FCC has not decided the matter as of October 15. A September 29th document indicates the FCC needs more time to review their request and won't automatically approve it. I believe you can count on the change happening eventually. **Will it happen on November 30, 2026?** NO!

The letter's 3rd page contains a notice because the FCC required Verizon to include it. The notice explains how you can share your opinion. The FCC will post its public notice on its website, **www.fcc.gov**. As of mid-October, that notice has not appeared. If you or your town officials submit comments to the FCC, identify the proceeding using WC Docket No. 26-252. .

My summary of the rest of the letter? "You should know there are plenty of options for getting phone service, and each comes with its own pitfalls." Technical jargon may also confuse you. Here is what some of it means:

- "Legacy" are older "obsolete" equipment, including some landline-connected home alarms and personal emergency buttons,
- "Fiber" means fiber-optic wires. These wires have hair thin strands of glass that transmit sound/info using light, hence the term optic.
- "FiOS™" is Verizon's trademarked name for its fiber-optic service.
- "Mobile wireless voice options" are wireless calling services, either cell phones, satellite phones, WIFI calling or VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). If you own a flip phone, a flat phone that doesn't fold, cell phone, smartphone, iPhone, Android or Pixel, you already have a mobile wireless voice option.

**COMMON QUESTIONS**

**How do I get help?** Contact your Council on Aging (COA), TechConnect, 296-5080, MA Department of Telecommunications, 800-392-6066, Whip City Fiber, 413-485-1251, Wired West, 833-991-9378 or other service.

**What happens to medical devices?** Some older medical monitors connect to landlines. Newer medical devices can use the same technology as cell phones. Tell your doctor about the upcoming change. Your doctor can help you find a replacement that communicates through cellular networks.

**Do I have to get internet service? Or a cell phone?** Maybe. If you already have broadband, Wi-Fi, a funny-looking box with flashing lights, a hotspot, or an internet bill from Whip City Fiber or Wired West, you are already paying for internet service. Adding phone service may be simple. If you don't have internet service, you could get it and use it only for your phone, or you could choose a basic cell phone instead.

**Are any options exactly like a landline during a power outage?** Nope! Today's alternatives all require electricity, either from an outlet or a battery. However, you can buy battery backups that provide temporary power when the electricity goes out. Think of them as tiny generators. Options include an uninterruptible power supply (UPS), a device with a built-in battery, or a portable power station. You can also charge phones and laptops from a car battery using an inexpensive adapter that plugs into the vehicle's cigarette-lighter-style outlet. And during extended power outages, town emergency plans include places where residents can charge their devices.

**How do I pick an option?** This doesn't have to be expensive. Help is available if you want to find the lowest-cost option. TechConnect staff can help you understand the choices and decide which one best meets your needs.

**Do I have a choice?** No. **Is it fair?** Maybe not. **Is there help?** Yes! Plenty of help is available with choosing, obtaining, and learning to use your new service.

## On the Road Again...

### TRIPS IN 2027



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

For more info call **413-296-4291**
Email: **francine.frenier@gmail.com**
**Mail: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096**

### Trips in 2027

**Multi Day Trip April 25- May 1 Savannah, Jekyll Island & Beaufort, SC. Seven days, six nights.** Visit Savannah, "The Belle of Georgia," Magnificent Beaufort, SC " The Queen of the Carolina Sea Islands," and Port Royal Sound Maritime Museum and more. Price $987 per person, double occupancy. A $25 discount is given if paid in full by January 25, 2027. Sign up NOW and pay later. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above *after the first of the year*.

**Multi-day trip October 17-23, 2027 Chicago, 7 days, 6 nights**. The partial itinerary includes a tour of Chicago, a skyline cruise on Lake Michigan, a visit to a historic Navy Pier and museums. Includes hotels, breakfasts and 4 dinners. Price $946 per person, double occupancy. A $25 discount is if paid in full by July 17, 2027. Sign up NOW and pay later. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail

**Multi Day Trip July 22-25** ** (exact dates to be determined) 3-days/2 nights trip to Baltimore to see the Red Sox play two games against the Baltimore Orioles along with some sightseeing.

**Day Trip December TBD** Christmastime at the Reagle Theater in Waltham, MA.
In the planning stages.

**TechConnect TECH TALK from Peg Whalen**
Remember Disney's "It's a Small World After All"? I've always loved that song and its message of connection. Today, our world is connected in ways we could hardly have imagined when that song first captured our hearts. Taking a little creative license, I've given the familiar tune a new digital twist

***It's a Digital World For All***
It's a world of tech, and a world of skills
It's a world of change, and a world with thrills
There's so much to be shared
That it's time we're aware
It's a digital world for all.

I'd love it if all of us were singing this song. Many of you already do, and I encourage more of you to join them and add your voice.

You've lived through party-line phone service, rotary dialing, and wireless phones. Today, we have handheld computers that make calls, take pictures, send text messages, write emails, and connect us through video. *Telehealth* appointments let us meet with our primary care providers from home. *Mobile banking* saves trips to the bank, *prescription refills* are easier, and *online shopping* means fewer trips to stores. We can explore subjects that interest us, learn almost anything for free, and even work or volunteer from home. We can watch young family members who live elsewhere grow up, share holidays with loved ones through video calls, and stay connected through social media like Facebook and Instagram. Online games offer stimulating interactions and a way to relieve boredom. Digital connections also help us maintain friendships with people we might otherwise lose touch with, whether we've moved closer to adult children or retired from jobs where we enjoyed the company of coworkers. There really is so much to share, explore, and learn. I encourage you to build your digital skills in whatever ways you find helpful. The possibilities are waiting for you.

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

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