

Plainfield Council on Aging

March 2018 Newsletter



Plainfield Council on Aging
P.O. Box 37
Plainfield, MA 01070

Deborah Thibault, Coordinator
Phone: 413-634-0275

March Events & Features

March Luncheons



***Join your friends for lunch
at the Plainfield Town Hall!***

- **Wednesday, March 14th at Noon**

Menu: Corned Beef/with cabbage... ALSO non-meat dish, homemade lasagna, deviled eggs and homemade bread.

- **Wednesday, March 28th at Noon**

Menu: Not our usual thing, but we thought we would try a "Blow-Out" Potluck. Share your favorite lunch dish with friends...

Socialize!

Recently we have had some new puzzles added to our collection. Before lunch, start one and stay after lunch and finish it. Have a cribbage board, decks of cards? Bring them along.

Interested in Scrabble, Banagrams, board games, coloring?

We have them!
Or just hang back and visit!



Join us at the **Plainfield COA Board meeting, Wednesday, March 14th**, after lunch (about 1:30 p.m.) All ideas and suggestions are welcome.

Happy Birthday to those born in March!



Blanche Cizek, Frank Alletson, Judy Gowdy,
Richard Phelps, Robert Silberburg,
Robert Kasper, Betsey Howes,
John Westwood, Kay Gilbert,
Jane Lewandowski, Martha Lynch,
Joan Bianchi, Joan Elizabeth Timberlake,
Cathy-Ann Chapman.

"Plainfield Cares" and Transportation Options

By Anne Irvine

Remember that **yellow card** you got in the mail announcing "Plainfield Cares," an informal town organization dedicated to helping seniors and others in need?

One of our efforts is to provide rides to those in need and we have volunteer drivers! Call **Jeanne Sargent at 413-634-0170** if you need a ride. She will contact the drivers and whoever is available will be in touch with you.

For seniors, there is also Hilltown Easy Ride (413-296-4232) which offers a van service for medical appointments, shopping and even just going out for fun with a group of friends. You do need to register with Easy Ride beforehand so they have all your information on

hand when you call. Call and have a registration form sent to you. For either of these services, please give them adequate notice. They cannot help you if you call at the last minute.

**What Nots St. Paddy's Day Potluck
March 16th, at 6PM**



The potluck food theme is "Green" or "Irish." Use your imagination! We will have a traditional white elephant swap. Bring something new, or a used treasure from home to put in the swap pile. Plants welcome. All women cordially invited. Location: 20 East St. Plainfield.

RSVP by calling Anne 941-916-5309 (cell #) or emailing: cscapeanne@aol.com

Thank You for Your Donations!

Your donations help support our monthly potlucks and other services here in Plainfield. We hope to expand on our services in the future to help support more seniors. **Please consider a tax deductible contribution.** If you would like to contribute, please fill out the form below and send it with your check made out to the Town of Plainfield and write "Plainfield COA" on the memo line. We thank you for your continuing support!
--*Deborah Thibault*

"Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes"
said Gray Panthers founder Maggie Kuhn.

We need to introduce new ideas, our ideas, for building creative social practices and policies into our town's institutions. Reshaping the landscape, you might say. How do we do that? How do we create new paradigms, new models, so that everyone can participate? Today, a key part of extended aging is the freedom to enjoy being involved. This requires reimagining a new sense of work, ways to help sustain and help grow our town values and rural culture.

You can make a real difference through volunteering. I must CAUTION you if you become involved. It WILL make you FEEL GOOD! Nothing wrong with that.

Our longer lives give us an extraordinary opportunity to work together where we have access to information and services we need to lead healthier lives and where we are seen as an integral GROWING-asset, contributors where all people are valued for who they are, not judged by how old they are.

Stay tuned for an exploration of town committees and commissions. For example, the Plainfield Council on Aging, the Energy Committee, and the Conservation Commission. Some of these might interest you and fit in with your skill set.

Rock the Boat! Have Fun!
Elaine Sidney
413-634-8063



The Plainfield Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Plainfield Council on Aging. My contribution of \$ _____ is attached.
(Please write your check to The Town of Plainfield)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Plainfield Council on Aging



Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



The number one fire safety item in your house is your smoke detector. It does save lives. In a typical home, fire, smoke, heat and toxic gases build up rapidly. So, when a smoke alarm sounds, get out of the building immediately before your escape route is blocked. Make sure you:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your house and in each bedroom.
- Test them monthly.
- Replace the battery twice a year.
- Check on the back of the detector for its age. If it is 10 or more years old, replace it with a new one which will have a 10 year battery. Smoke alarms do wear out, so replace them.
- Never ever disable your smoke detector. The life you save will be your own.

Be SAFE!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

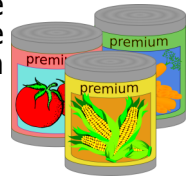
The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Hilltown Food Pantry

The Hilltown Food Pantry, run under the auspices of the Northampton Survival Center, is located on the bottom floor of the town office building in Goshen. The pantry is open to people in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. Hours are Wednesdays from 1pm-3pm, and, on the third Wednesday, there are extended hours: 1pm-6pm. During the winter months, the pantry closes if the Hampshire Regional School District closes.

Diane Meehan is the director of the food pantry. If you have any questions, the pantry's phone number is 413-268-7578, and will be answered on Wednesdays, otherwise the call goes to the Northampton Survival Center.

Donations of non perishable items, personal care items and paper products are always welcome and appreciated. In-season produce is also helpful. Someone is available at the food pantry after 10am on Wednesdays for donation drop-offs.



Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list.

Finally – new Medicare cards!

At long last, people on Medicare will be getting new identity cards with a new number. If you haven't reached that magic age yet, please know that a person's current Medicare number is their social security number followed by one or two characters. The characters don't exactly disguise the number, so if you carry your Medicare card, which you may need now and again, you are also carrying your social security number! And that, of course, is a big no-no because of identity theft.

New cards will be mailed starting in April 2018. Some cards may not show up for a while because there are a lot of us who will be receiving them; the government has allowed itself a year.

Now this will be a shocker: there are likely scammers out there who will call and try to trip you up. They might tell you that a fee is required for the card, that more personal information is needed before the card can be mailed, or that your benefits will be stopped until you provide more information. All not true. Just hang up.

Your new Medicare number, called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier, will still need to be protected to ensure your privacy and security. Make sure you know who you are sharing it with.

The office sending the cards is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS says if someone calls and asks for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Turn 'em in.

Cheers,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD Committee Member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Outreach in Cummington continues to expand

By Peg Whalen

Regional Outreach Coordinator for the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

The Cummington Council on Aging is reaching out to over 300 town seniors. COA board members continue functioning as the primary outreach team, respectfully and regularly watching out for the wellbeing of residents that may be isolated or have special vulnerabilities.

Cummington's COA is the only hilltown board that maintains a specific council position of Corresponding Secretary. In this role, Peg sends cards of support or condolence. The entire COA board identifies people that are ill or families that have recently lost a senior. Birthday cards also go out to residents 80 and over.

Their COA Neighbor to Neighbor ride program provides non-driving seniors with access to transportation by matching volunteers with seniors needing rides to appointments. Early expansion of outreach included a discussion of the book *Being Mortal*, which continued beyond the group meetings. Several book group participants have continued meeting about issues reflected in the group's name: "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, and Befriending Death". In successive months, the group focuses on "living fully" the first month, "aging gracefully" the second month and "befriending death" the third month, and then repeats the cycle. The discussion group is open to all ages. Participants have come from Holyoke, Williamsburg, Hinsdale, Plainfield and Chesterfield, among others. They meet once a month on the 2nd Tuesday from 1pm to 3pm in the Community House Library room.

Most recently, the Cummington COA initiated contact with younger seniors aged 60 to 69. This growing group of seniors received a personal letter introducing the COA, which invited input and participation. The letter was shared with area COAs. Several neighboring towns are using this approach as an outreach tool to engage younger seniors.

Several book and discussion participants and others have formed Cummington Community Cares, a newly organized town volunteer group, open to all. The initial group includes roughly 20 participants. The group's purpose is to establish a program that strengthens the ability of the people of Cummington to care for each other in the face of disasters and emergencies- large or small, community-wide or personal. The group is exploring what community preparedness involves and how residents can effectively care for each other. Another small group of volunteers is looking at ways to prepare food for people in need. Discussion has started to strategize ways to expand a call list or phone tree to encompass the entire town.

The group is also considering ways to mobilize a group to do "mapping" of community resources and needs. In January and February, Cummington Fire and emergency management members trained a group of residents as the first C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team), resulting in a small

initial team of residents with the knowledge and skills to assist others in many types of emergencies.

The West Cummington Congregational Church also does outreach to the congregation and other residents by maintaining a call list that any resident can be included on, arranging for nutrition support through coordinated food access, and counts several members of the COA board among the congregation. The Village Church does outreach to its congregation, many of whom are seniors. The Village Church nurtures community and promotes vitality in the village by providing care, connection, and healing to church members. One COA board member has a connection to the congregation.

Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

Adults age 65 and older are eligible to receive this tax credit when their property taxes and half of their water/sewer bills total more than 10% of their income. Or, if they rent an apartment (without a state or federal subsidy), they may get this tax credit if their rent is more than 25% of their income.

Here are some details:

- Tax filers should use the "Schedule CB form" and "Form 1", respectively.
- It's easy to get the forms. Download Form 1 and Schedule CB Form at the official Department of Revenue site: www.mass.gov/lists/2017-massachusetts-personal-income-tax-forms-and-instructions

If you need help, VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) helps low income and middle income people fill out tax returns for free. Call them at 1-800-906-9887. There are other options including AARP's Tax-Aide program and you can reach them at 1-888-227-7669.

It can be tough to continue taking care of our furry loved ones when illness and death affect our lives. **New 2U Dog Rescue** is a non profit organization in Greenfield run by compassionate volunteers who take in dogs from senior citizens and folks who can no longer care for their beloved pets. Their goal is to place the dogs into a loving foster home environment, evaluate them and match them up with their New2U forever family in the state of Massachusetts.

**Contact Dawn: 413-824-9225,
new2udogrescue@yahoo.com.**

RESOURCES DIRECTORY

Domestic Violence Advocate , Hilltown Safety at Home (HS@H)	413 559-8039
If you need help in an emergency, call 911 or the Safe Passage hotline	888 345-5282
Elder Abuse Hotline	800 922-2275
First Call for Help Information and Referral Resources	800 339-7779
Fuel Assistance Application and Recertification	800 370-0940
Hilltown Elder Network – H E N (sponsored by Hilltown CDC)	413 296-4536
Veterans' Service Officer Tom Geryk	413 587-1299
(Westhampton) Joe Henning	413 207-3541
(Plainfield) Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District in Greenfield	413 772-1571
Regional Outreach Coordinator , Peg Whalen	413 404-4566
DO NOT CALL Registry	888 382-1222

Food Services

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Brown Bag Program	800 247-9632 or 413 268-8407
Food Stamps - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	413 552-5400
For assistance call Fran @ Williamsburg COA	413 268-8407
Hilltown Food Pantry - Goshen Town Hall - Diane Meehan, Director	413 268-7578 Wed 1-3; 3 rd Wed 1-6
Meal Site Williamsburg Senior Center	413 268-8407
Meals on Wheels Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES)	413 586-2000 or 800 322-0551
Northampton Survival Center , 265 Prospect St. Northampton	413 586-6564
Salvation Army Emergency Food, Fuel or Medication Vouchers	413 586-5336/6564

Health Services

Highland Valley Elder Services Intake referral for homecare, etc.	413 586-2000
Hilltown Community Health Center - Medical & Dental	413 238-5511, ext. 131
HOPE Nurse , Robin Laferriere, RN	413 238-5511, ext. 313
Janet Dimock , HealthWise Community Health Worker	413 238-5511, ext. 149
Podiatrist Dr. Michael Coby , call Williamsburg Senior Center to schedule (Alternating months at the Senior Center)	413 268-8407
Foot Care Oni, RN , foot care in Goshen, Call Liz Loven for appt.	413 268-7122
Oni, RN , foot care in Williamsburg or in-home visits	413 268-8407
Oni, RN , foot care in Plainfield or in-home visits	413 522-7219
Diane Roeder , foot care in Whamp & Chesterfield	413 374-0457
SHINE, Medicare & Drug Coverage Part D & Prescription Advantage	
Wayne Glaser	Call your COA for appointment
Richard Bauman (Westhampton)	413 527-5240
Lorraine York-Edberg	413 773-5555, ext. 2275
Mass Health and New Health Coverage	
John Bergeron, HCHC-Huntington	413 667-2203
Buliah Mae Thomas at Hilltown Comm. Health Center	413 667-2203

Transportation Services

Cummington Neighbor to Neighbor Drivers	413 634-2262
Westhampton transportation appts or groc. shopping, Louise Jasionkowski	413 527-5134
Williamsburg Medical Rides Williamsburg Senior Center (to schedule)	413 268-8407
PVTA Dial-A-Ride (tickets sold at Williamsburg Senior Center)	866 277-7741
FRTA Van Fran Goebel	413 296-4232

Local Councils on Aging

Chesterfield COA , Janice Gibeau	413 296-4007
Cummington COA , Anne Parsons	413 634-2262
Goshen COA , Evelyn Culver	413 268-3316
Plainfield COA , Deborah Thibault	413 634-0275
Westhampton COA , Julia Lennen	413 537-9880
Williamsburg Senior Center , Marie Westburg	413 268-8407
Worthington COA , Sandra Epperly	413 238-5584

Plainfield Council on Aging
c/o Deborah Thibault
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Plainfield, MA 01070

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Out and About in March

Thurs. March 15th at 12:15pm
St. Patrick's Day Songs & Stories with
folksinger and storyteller Tim Van Egmond
Williamsburg Senior Center, 141 Main Rd.
Haydenville, MA

Van Egmond will accompany himself on a wide variety of traditional instruments, including guitar, hammered dulcimer, and limberjack (a wooden puppet that taps out a rhythm dancing on a paddleboard). His captivating talent, warmth, and engaging humor create a moving and enjoyable experience for all.



This program is supported in part by a grant from the Williamsburg Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Fri. March 16th, 9am & 10am
Spa Day at Smith Vocational
80 Locust St. Northampton, MA

Students in the Cosmetology program are offering the following: Shampoo, cut & style \$5.00; Manicure

\$4.00; Pedicure \$8.00; Basic Facial \$8.00. Please call 413-296-4007 to make an appointment. Each appointment takes about an hour and are scheduled for 9 am and 10 am in Room 124 of Building A at the school. Following the Spa Day, enjoy lunch at the Oliver Smith Restaurant!

Sun. March 18th at 2pm
Sidetracked
Chesterfield Comm. Center,
400 Main Rd. Chesterfield, MA



Roots rock, Country and Blues for all ages. Come shake off the winter blues and enjoy this concert that will have you on your feet in no time.

Funded in part by a multigenerational grant awarded by Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield COA, which coordinates these programs in partnership with: the Westhampton COA, Chesterfield Public Library, CFCEs of Westhampton and Chesterfield, Davenport Childcare, and New Hingham PTO.

Tues. March 20th at 4:30pm
Prediabetes Informational Meeting
Hilltown Community Center, 9 Russell Rd.
Huntington, MA

Free yearlong class offered to all area residents with prediabetes. Contact Ellie Brasil at 413-667-2203 ext. 322 or ebrasil@hchcweb.org for more information.