

Plainfield Council on Aging

April 2018 Newsletter



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

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April Events & Features

April Luncheons



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

- **Wednesday, April 11th at Noon**

Menu: Roasted Sweet Red Peppers with Spaghetti Stuffing. Green Salad with Red Beets. Dessert: Apple Crisp. Take Home Brown Bag of fresh fruits.

- **Wednesday, April 25th at Noon**

Menu: New England Beef Brisket with Potatoes and Root Veggies. Meat-Free option; Vegetable Quiche hold the crust! Green Salad. Dessert: Bring something to share with a table guest! Take Home Brown Bag of fresh fruits.

Happy Birthday to those born in April!



Bertha Higgins, Alice Schertle, Francis Blair, Mary Benisek, Elaine Sidney, Lee Monroe, Ellen Baer, Lynn Carol Robbins, John B. Lydall, Patrick L. Williamson, Anne K. Williamson, Lois Markland, Ruth Osgood, Anne Marie Barbanti, Dandy Bro, Donald Jordan, Clara Bouricius

Foot Care Clinic will be held at the Plainfield Town Hall, **Tuesday April 3rd at 9am**. Appointments are prescheduled. Please call Ms. Oni, the foot care nurse: 413-522-7219. A session includes a check-up of your feet and your shoes, a foot massage and cutting of your toenails. The cost is \$30. Home visits can be scheduled for an additional fee.

Plainfield Cares Medical Equipment and Supplies Now Available!



Blood Pressure Clinic will be held at the Plainfield Town Hall, prior to the luncheon, on **April 11**. All are welcome. No costs are involved.

The Plainfield COA Board meeting will be held on **April 11** (about 1:30 pm). If you are curious or maybe interested in joining the COA Board, please join us to see what's happening. There are many flexible ways to participate. The Board is one way among many. What gifts and skills are you best at? I'll listen. Elaine Sidney: 634-8063, Elaine.Sidney@icloud.com

Did you know that "Plainfield Cares" has assembled a significant stash of medical equipment and supplies for folks in need in Plainfield?

The equipment can be borrowed and returned when not needed; supplies can start you out until you can get "down the hill" for your own purchasing. Below is a list of some of what we have now;

if you need something you can call: Sadie Stull, 634-5013, sarahestuall@gmail.com. Susan Pearson, 634-0025, spearsonbooks@gmail.com

- Shower Seats with Backs (CAREX & GUARDIAN) Weight capacity 250lbs.
- NOVA 4 wheeled Walker with hand brakes and Seat. Weight capacity 225lbs.
- GUARDIAN. 2 Wheel Folding Walkers. Adjustable heights. Weight capacity 300-350lbs.
- ROSCOE Black Wheel Chair. Adjustable foot rests.
- DRIVE. Gray. New. Over-toilet seat. Adjustable height. Max user 350lbs.
- Poise Pads for Women and Men's Assurance Guards maximum absorbency.
- ASCENSIA BREEZE 2 Blood Glucose Meter with lithium battery.

All equipment is washed and bagged, ready to meet your needs.

Thank You for Your Donations!

Your donations help support our monthly pot-lucks 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**



Home Modification: How to Get It Done (from the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence)

The research is clear. People want to live independently in their own homes as they age. Making simple changes (home modifications) can help. So why don't more people make these changes? Consider these common myths... and the realities.



Myth: Home is the safest place to be.
REALITY: Homes can contain many safety hazards that, if not addressed, could cause a fall.

Myth: Making my home safer will cost too much.
REALITY: Many changes are inexpensive and easy, such as changing lighting and removing rugs.

Myth: Home modifications will make my home look like a hospital.
REALITY: There are many products designed to blend in with your home's style and decor.

Myth: Renters are not allowed to make changes to their homes.
REALITY: Under the Fair Housing Amendments Act, landlords must allow reasonable home modifications requests.

If you need to hire someone to make the changes, consider taking these steps:

Get recommendations from friends who have made changes. Hire a licensed and bonded contractor/remodeler. Be specific about work to be done in advance. Ask for a written agreement with a small down payment. Make the final payment only after the project is completed. Check the local Better Business Bureau for a specific provider's reliability and performance record.

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!

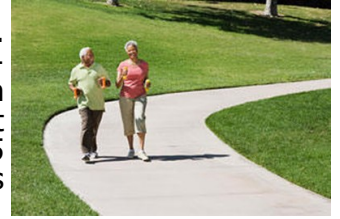
Plainfield Council on Aging

Regional News

Strength in Numbers: Preventing Falls Among Older Adults

Thurs. April 5th, 1-2pm
Westhampton Congregational Church
1 Tobb Hill Rd., Westhampton

Unintentional falls are a threat to the lives, independence and health of adults ages 65 and older. Every 18 seconds, an older adult is treated in an emergency department for a fall, and every 35 minutes someone dies as a result of their injuries.



Although one in three older adults fall each year in the United States, falls are not an inevitable part of aging. Falls are often preventable through increasing activity and exercise, balance training, education, and home safety assessment. These proven strategies can reduce falls and help older adults live longer and more independently. Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice, in cooperation with the Westhampton COA, invite you to participate in a special "Falls Prevention" presentation. John Yount, PT, Falls Prevention Coordinator from Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice will present the program.

Hilltown Easy Ride Regular Schedule:

- Monday** – medical rides prioritized
- Tuesday** – Big Y in Northampton (we still do medical rides whenever possible on this day)
- Wednesday** – medical rides prioritized
- Thursday** – shopping in Pittsfield (we still do medical rides whenever possible on this day)
- Friday** – best day to schedule group social outings (we still do medical rides whenever possible on this day)

You must be 60+ to be eligible for the van and fill out a Demand Respond Application with FRTA. We would gladly help you with that process, or you may go on the FRTA website and download an application. It takes about a week to process, and once you get the acceptance letter you can start booking rides.

We are happy to answer questions:
413-296-4536 or ride@hilltowncdc.org.

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.

You Aren't Just a Number!

You are a valued individual. However, your Social Security number is pretty important in your life! It's really not good to carry your SS card with you because if someone gets ahold of it, they are on the way to stealing your identity. A crook will know that the first three digits tell where and when the card / number was issued and they may be able to get these if they know your birthdate and hometown. The two digits in the middle are a book-keeping identifier. The last four digits are unique and what the crook really needs.

So, I say: "Don't carry your card!" And you say: "But I don't know my number! What if I need it?"

Here's some suggestions:

- Write down the number, accurately, for heaven's sake, on two or three pieces of paper and carry them in different places in your wallet.
- Even better, write them in a different order, e.g., backwards. Recording them backwards will help disguise the last four. Say your number is 567 – 50 – 1234. Write it down as 432105 in one place, and 765 in another.
- Even better than that: learn your last four and don't write them down.
- And you guessed it, the best idea is to learn the entire number so you don't carry it in any way, shape, or form.

If you have any better suggestions, send them and I'll consider giving you a prize.

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

Chesterfield's Outreach Team is active and growing

By Peg Whalen
Regional Outreach Coordinator for the
Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

In 2018, the Chesterfield Council on Aging is reaching out to over 382 older adults turning 60 or better in 2018. Chesterfield's outreach is multi-faceted and growing rapidly.

- COA board members have continued doing outreach individually.
- Traditional activities continue and are combined with informational phone contacts and concrete assistance through home visits and food deliveries.
- Intergenerational COA activities are a common feature of Chesterfield events including square dances, breakfast/lunch at New Hingham Elementary School, among others.

The Chesterfield COA board created an Outreach Team. The team meets monthly to identify older adults known to be isolated or potentially isolated and those with specific needs. Chesterfield's Outreach Team is a diverse group of town residents. The team includes four COA board members, the UCC minister, a church deacon, and the HEN (Hilltown Elder Network) Coordinator for Chesterfield, Helen Pelletier. The team also plans to have others join them including Fire, Police, Emergency Management, and Library.

Chesterfield's Outreach Team is creating a network of volunteers to assist older adults in need. Their goal is to have neighbors giving rides, doing tasks and providing supports needed by the town's older adults.

Rides by volunteer drivers take older adults not only to medical visits, but also grocery shopping, entertainment, errands, banking and haircuts. Tasks could include short-term help following illness or rehabilitation, regular or periodic cooking, regular phone calls, or help getting information. Support may include regular social visits, sharing a common interest, playing cards or games, or simply keeping someone company so their caregiver gets a break.

Did you know?

Your COA has a list of volunteer opportunities and needs.

If you have some time, please speak with your COA to find out how you can help!



Expert Builder Kent Hicks to present: Going Green and Aging in Place in Chesterfield



**Sunday, April 15th at 2pm
Chesterfield Community Center
400 Main Rd.**

The ability and desire to remain in our home and our community long-term can often become a major dilemma in life. When making the decision about whether we or our extended families can personally manage health and finances, important questions are faced:

- * Can we physically stay in our homes?
- * Can we afford to either retrofit our existing home or build a new house that allows us to "age in place?"
- * Should we move into senior housing?

Rural life presents challenges to creating homes that are energy efficient and environmentally friendly. Zoning laws vary and septic requirements are different than those in urban areas. The upfront higher construction costs to build or renovate a green, efficient home can seem hard to balance with the future benefit of not having to face the usual, higher utility costs in retirement. Out of a sense of responsibility and respect for our beautiful community, more community members want to create homes that contribute to the sustainability of the environment.

The Chesterfield Council on Aging Senior Housing Committee has been discussing these same questions as we look to progress towards a more integrated, age-friendly community. Our wish is to provide a range of options for people of all ages who are hoping to stay in their home town.

Kent Hicks, a member of the Building Committee and owner of Kent Hicks Construction Co., has generously volunteered to present a program that will shed light on the most common questions about "going green," and also describe new approaches in dealing with rural housing, living in a healthy home and building small. A Chesterfield resident and expert in the construction of energy efficient homes, Kent is more than familiar with the nuances of living in our unique Hilltowns.

Please join us for Kent's presentation on April 15th at 2pm at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main St, Chesterfield Ma. It is certain to be an informational and interesting approach to "aging in place" in our homes in the hilltowns.

On the Go!

The Northampton Senior Center has arranged the following outings, and you are welcome to join!



Please make your reservations early as these trips fill up fast! **Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.**

April 20– Friday: Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, a unique museum filled with 10 rooms of Polish history, emigration and culture. Located in Chicopee. Enjoy a German-fare lunch on your own at the Munich House prior to the museum stop. Sign up early, seats are limited. Cost is \$36.

June 21–Thursday: The Gilded Age of the Berkshires. Tour Ventfort Hall and The Mount. Buffet lunch on terrace at The Mount. Cost is \$112. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by May 7.

June 26-28: Three Day Tour to Lancaster, PA. Two shows, *Jesus* at Sight & Sound Theater (reserved orchestra seats) and *The Wizard of Oz* at Dutch Apple Dinner Theater. 2 nights at the Best Western Hotel, 2 full breakfasts at the hotel, family style dinner at an actual Amish home. Price includes baggage handling, tax and driver gratuities. \$434 with double occupancy. **Pay in installments (balance due May 18th) or pay in full by April 5th and receive a \$25 discount.** \$50 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

July 10 – Tuesday: Tour of Mark Twain Home and Wickham Gardens. Lunch at Promenade Shops on your own. Cost is \$74. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 1.

July 24 – Tuesday: Best of Boston. Duck Boat Tour, lunch on your own at Quincy Market and New England Aquarium. Cost is \$109. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 12.

August 7 –Tuesday: Tour of Fenway Park and Lunch at Cheers. Enjoy some free time in Boston. Cost is \$123. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by July 1.

Sept. 7-11: Washington D.C., 5 days, via bus, \$540 with double occupancy. Full day at the Smithsonian. Pay in installments or pay in full by June 1 and receive a \$25 discount. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

Oct. 21– Sunday: Halloween in Salem. Enjoy

the Salem Street festivities and a tour of the House of Seven Gables. Lunch is on your own in downtown Salem. Cost is \$82. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by September 7.

Strengthening Networks of Existing Community Supports

Is your town safe? Affordable? Walkable? Healthy? Inclusive? Does it meet your needs? Is it a great place to grow up and grow old? In short, is it “age-friendly?” In 2015, the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs received a Service Incentive Grant from the state’s Executive Office of Elder Affairs. With these funds, the Consortium has been part of strengthening coordinated networks of community-based supports. Across the hilltowns, there are long-time community systems that support older adults. These supports include fire, police, and others.

On February 28th, Peg Whalen, the Consortium’s Regional Outreach Coordinator, sat down with Bernie Forgea, Cummington Fire Chief; Mike Perkins, Cummington Police Chief; and fire chiefs from 10 other hilltowns to discuss mutual concerns. Together the group talked about ways the COAs can work more closely with town departments. Fire chiefs expressed strong interest in having their COAs help engage residents about many issues:

- Goshen fire chief, Sue Labrie, commented about the usefulness of COAs accounting for and access to information about many older adult residents. For example, COAs are better able to know which older adults are living alone and where.
- Chesterfield fire chief, David Hewes, shared his department’s concern about the under use of emergency alert systems among adults, especially those living alone.
- Several participants cited instances in which their departments have been called to check on a resident. They reported often finding people who had fallen, were unable to get up and laid for *as long as 24 to 48 hours* before help arrived.
- Whalen shared information about the grant, purpose of COAs and their goal of developing supportive, age-friendly communities.

Fire chiefs agreed that working together on these important issues was helpful. Watch for more updates on ways COAs are working with other town departments. Coordination can make your town a more age-friendly community for residents!

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

Out and About in April

Fri. April 6th @ 6pm, April 7th @6pm, April 8th @ 2pm
Tales of the 1000 Nights

*Worthington Town Hall, 160 Huntington Rd.
Worthington, MA*

Directed and adapted by Maureen Shea, Musical Direction by Meg Breyman and presented by Hilltown Playing, it's a tale where Scheherazade weaves stories to save her head, and to heal the King's heart. Seating is limited. Tickets are available at the Corners Grocery Store in Worthington, The Old Creamery in Cumington, or by calling 413-386-7576. *Sponsored by the Worthington Rec. Committee and a multigenerational grant awarded by Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield COA. Supported in part by a grant from the local cultural councils of Chesterfield, Cumington, Plainfield and Worthington, who are supported by the Mass. Cultural Council, a state agency.*

Fri. April 6th & 13th, 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. There are only 10 spots per day, so reserve early. 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. April 22nd, 2pm
Old Country Road

*Goshen Town Hall, 42 Main St.
Goshen, MA*

Old Country Road is dedicated to keeping the sound of "true" or vintage country music alive, featuring songs from the 1950s and 60s. FREE and open to the public! All ages welcome! Refreshments provided by the Goshen COA. *Sponsored by: the Goshen COA, the Goshen Cultural Council and the Mass Cultural Council.*



Sat. April 28th, 9am-3pm
Clothing Exchange

*Goshen Congregational Church, 45 Main St.
Goshen, MA*

Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent and clean out your closet at the same time! Please drop off your washed, gently-used men's, women's and children's spring/summer clothing and accessories at the church on Thurs. 4/26 5-9pm and Fri. 4/27 9-3, then come back to shop on Sat. the 28th from 9am-3pm! Please no swimwear, socks or undergarments. If you need an alternate drop-off time, please call the church: 268-7427. All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not. Leftover clothing will be donated to local charities unless otherwise specified.