

Plainfield Council on Aging

August 2018 Newsletter



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

Deborah Thibault, Coordinator
Phone: 413-634-0275

August Events & Features

August Luncheons



***Join your friends and meet
someone new
at the Plainfield Town Hall!***

- **Wednesday, August 8th at Noon**

Menu: Haitian Pork – marinated in citrus. You'll like it, really! Served with rice. Vegetarian option: Hummus (chickpeas), served with pita bread, chopped olives, pine nuts and feta cheese. Regular Salad.
Dessert: Pie and ice cream.

- **Wednesday, August 22nd at Noon**

Potluck Italian Antipasto. Small bits of tasty foods: Olives, pepperoncini, mushrooms, artichoke hearts, fresh cheese, mozzarella, provolone, roasted red pepper, veggies in oil & vinegar. Ann Kohn will bake fresh bread!

Dear COA Lunch Guest,

In preparing foods, I never add salt, honey is used as a substitute for sugar (when possible), and green pepper, garlic, and hot spices are never added to the recipes. Most of the foods are indigenous to our area, like eggplants and cucumbers, however we sometimes crave other cultures' cuisine and cooking. This month we taste the contribution of Haitian

Pork and North African Eggplant. Enjoy! ~ Elaine Sidney

Blood Pressure Clinic will be held at the Plainfield Town Hall, prior to the luncheon, on August 8th. All are welcome.

The COA Board meeting will be held **August 8th**, after the luncheon, (about 1:30pm) at the Plainfield town hall.

The Plainfield COA Board and I would like to welcome **Lina Bernstein** to the COA board!

Foot Care Clinic

Oni, the foot care nurse has decided to take time now to spend with her children. I would like to thank her for all her wonderful care she has given to Plainfield seniors.

Oni was even kind enough to find a replacement to carry on in her "footsteps". Piper Sagan of Sunderland will be running the Foot Care Clinic beginning on **Tuesday, August 7th at 9am**. Appointments are prescheduled. If you would like to schedule, please call Piper at **413-522-8432** to do so.



Happy Birthday to those born in August!



Ann Irvine, Robert Persing, Ann Kohn, Susan Flores, Marilyn Andrews, Donna Monroe, Merton Taylor, Douglas Wabnig, Imants Ansberbs, Bob Baker, Bruce Stockwell, Maud Geng, Corey Powers, Allen Roberts, Norman Pfeifer, David Westort, Carmen Senno, Avery Sharpe, Claude Dupont, Karen Medeiros-Blair, Jeremiah Lobrose, Joan Wallman, Peter O'Brien, John O'Dea Jr., Steven Nartowicz, Nancy Lawrence, Polly Ryan-Lone.

Did you know?

That if you are a veteran or a survivor of a veteran, there are many services available to you. Plainfield Cares has obtained booklets and other material that outline these services. We will be putting them in the Plainfield Library for people to pick up.

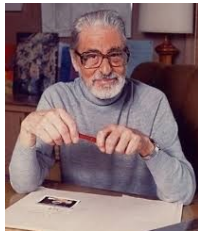
We also wish to let people know that the person to be contacted regarding veterans' services is Brian Brooks. Brian is in the Greenfield office and can be reached by phone at 413-772-1571 and by email at brian@greenfieldma.gov.

Susi Westwood
Co-chair, Plainfield Cares

In case you haven't noticed, check out our **NEW** sign placed on the lawn in front of the town hall. It's large enough so you will be able to see what's for lunch or any new happenings at your COA. Speaking of new happenings, keep on the lookout for new programs and events coming to the Plainfield COA!

Quote from Dr. Seuss

"I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities."
~ Dr. Seuss

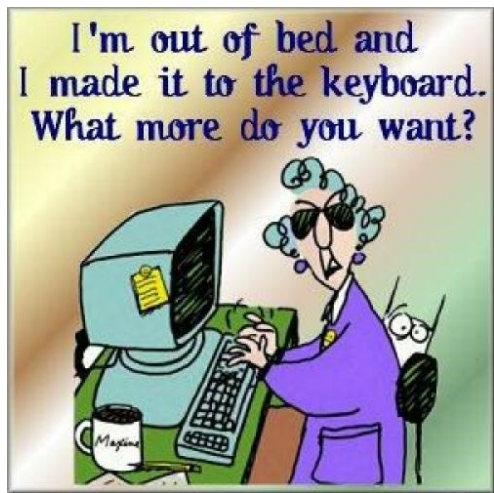


Blankets for Kids



Do your talents include crocheting, knitting or quilting? The Northwestern District Attorney's Office is partnering with Project Linus and TRIAD to provide blankets to children who have been affected by the opioid epidemic or other trauma. Project Linus is a national non-profit organization that provides homemade blankets to children in need.

For more information, please contact Rachel Senecal at 413-586-9225 or Rachel.Senecal@Massmail.State.MA.US



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**

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

The Massachusetts Senior Legal Helpline (800) 342-5297

Are you 60+ and in need of legal help?

The Helpline is a project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Boston. We provide free legal information and referral services to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years old or older. **The Helpline is open Monday through Friday 9AM-12PM.**

Can I get a free attorney?

Most callers will not be eligible for a free attorney. Helpline advocates can help you find out if you are eligible and complete an application for services with a Massachusetts civil legal services program. Legal services law types include: Social Security/SSI, Veterans Benefits, MassHealth, Medicare, Consumer, Public Benefits, Unemployment, Foreclosures, Utilities, Guardianship, Wills/Advance Directives, Bankruptcy, Housing, Family law, and Nursing Home.

Can I get referrals to reduced fee and private bar attorneys?

If you are not eligible for a free attorney and have some ability to pay an attorney, we can refer you to reduced fee attorney referral programs where

attorneys will charge you on a sliding scale based on your income.

We can also refer you to private bar attorney referral programs. Private attorneys will charge for their services. Some cases, such as medical malpractice, workmen's compensation, personal injury, and Social Security benefits denials do not require you to pay money upfront in order to get an attorney. The attorney fees are taken from your award only if you win your case.

Can I get free legal information or referrals?

Yes. Your Helpline advocate will research your legal issue and provide you with information or referrals on most legal topics. We can also text, e-mail, or mail you links or written materials.



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.

And In Review...

There will not be a test, but I thought it might be a good idea to go back over some stuff about scams. A recent issue of Consumer Reports listed the top 4 kinds of scams that are STILL tripping us up and costing us money.

- **IRS Imposters.** You owe us, pay up or we'll put you in jail.
- **Home Repairs and Security Checks.** Hello home owner, I'm a contractor and noted that you need a new roof. Give me the money, I'll get the supplies, and fix it. OR we are your new security or computer company, and we need to reboot your system.
- **Grandparent Scam.** You grandson is in jail in Mexico, I'm a lawyer, if you send me money I'll get him out. Poor little Timmy – he is so scared there.
- **Lotteries and Sweepstakes.** Congratulations, you won! Just send us money to cover taxes and the expense of sending you your prize.

I lied – here is a test. If I get a phone call from a number or name I don't know, I should:

- a. Just hang up
- b. Not answer in the first place
- c. Try to outwit the caller by keeping him/her on the line and giving false information or trying to find out where they are.

Answer: You chose A and B! YES! Congrats!

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

Hilltown Elder Network:

When a H.E.N. is not a chicken... but is the kind of help you could use!

Who? Income eligible seniors aged 62 years or older who reside in Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Williamsburg, Westhampton, Huntington and Peru. A participant's eligibility is determined during the intake process. An over-income applicant may use HEN to locate a screened, experienced, local caregiver who will provide services for private payment.

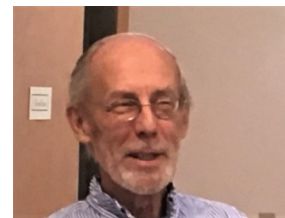
What? Home cleaning, laundry, food shopping and meal preparation, snow removal, handling of firewood and escorted transportation for medical appointments or shopping are typical forms of assistance offered. There is no charge. Services provided by HEN caregivers can only be those home chores and daily living tasks that applicants report they are unable to do themselves, due to health conditions and/or mobility limitations. HEN Caregivers are trained local residents who are paid for their services. Each caregiver is reference-screened and CORI-checked. HEN services do not include personal care.

When? As an individually customized service, HEN provides continued weekly assistance (typically 1-4 hours per week), short term assistance (i.e. helping an elder who recently suffered

a broken hip and is recovering at home), or one time assistance for an unusual need, such as the clearing of snow following a heavy storm.

How? For further information, call the coordinator for your town (listed below) who can provide you with more details about eligibility and available services in your town.

Chesterfield	Helen Pelletier	238-4418
Cummington	Sandra Powers	634-5558
Goshen	Fran Goebel	268-7411
Plainfield	Sandra Powers	634-5558
Westhampton	Lilly Baxter	527-1532
Williamsburg	Fran Goebel	268-7411
Worthington	Helen Pelletier	238-4418
Huntington	Amy Ellinger	207-2256
Peru	Amy Phinney	655-0123



Charlie Hayes, the administrator of the HEN program, recently received a Certificate of Recognition from Highland Valley Elder Services on the 13th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day for all of his work and support in preventing elder abuse.

IS YOUR SEPTIC OVERFLOWING? IS YOUR ROOF LEAKING? ARE YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS OLD AND DRAFTY?

If you can't afford to make these repairs, call me about getting a no-payment, no-interest housing rehab loan!

If you live in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Peru, or Worthington, we have funding available!

Eligible improvements may include:

- Roofs, Windows, Doors, and Foundation Repairs
- Septic Systems, Sewer Tie in's
- Heating Systems, Oil Tank Installations/Removals
- Handicap accessibility work
- Plumbing and Electrical Updates
- New Wells Drilled, Water Filtration, Pump Replacement

Program benefits include:

- No Monthly Payments and No Interest
- Loans may be entirely forgiven
- Detailed Work Specifications
- Project oversight by 20+ year construction expert
- Pre-approved contractors

Eligible homeowners should:

- Live in a single-family, owner-occupied housing unit
- Be current with property taxes and mortgage payments
- Fall within the income guidelines

Household Income Guidelines/ Limits:

Household Size	Maximum Gross Annual Income
1	\$45,200
2	\$51,650
3	\$58,100
4	\$64,550
5	\$69,750
6	\$74,900
7	\$80,050
8	\$85,250

Call Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 for an application or for more information.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.

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.**

August 7 – Tuesday: Tour of Fenway Park and Lunch at Cheers. Enjoy some free time in Boston. Cost is \$123.

August 15 – Wednesday: Guided tour of Kennebunkport with time to shop. Lunch at Mike's Clam Shack. Cost is \$109.

August 19 – Sunday Matinee: Tanglewood Music Center. Leonard Bernstein Memorial Concert, featuring Yo-Yo Ma. Shed seats, lunch on your own. All-inclusive cost is \$84.

Sept. 7-11: Washington D.C., 5 days, via bus, \$540 with double occupancy. Full day at the Smithsonian. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

Sept. 25 – Tuesday: Big E. Circus Spectacular at the Big Top, The Drifters and Platters perform on stage. Cost is \$14, and includes round trip bus, and entrance fee to the exposition.

October 21 – Sunday: Halloween in Salem. Enjoy the Salem Street festivities and a Tour of 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 7th.

December 10 – Monday: White Christmas Big Band show and luncheon at Aqua Turf, Plantsville, CT. Rob Zappulla and his 13-piece Big Band will perform holiday favorites. Cost is \$102. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by October 30th.

Coming soon:
MGM Casino, Your suggestion?

Cheaper Electric? not so fast ...

Have you gotten a call from an alternate electric company promising lower monthly bills if you switch from Eversource to their service? Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, citing aggressive sales tactics, false promises of cheaper electric bills and the targeting of low-income, elderly, and minority residents, issued a report calling for an end to the competitive electricity supply market for individ-

ual residential customers in Massachusetts.

The report found that Massachusetts consumers paid \$176.8 million more than if they had stayed with their utility company during the two-year period from July 2015 to June 2017.

According to the Attorney General, "In Massachusetts, residential customers, like commercial and industrial customers, can 'shop around' for electricity rates. Customers can choose to get their electric supply from their utility – National Grid or Unitil or Eversource – or from a 'competitive supplier.'" ...The AG's report found that the average low-income customer enrolled with a competitive supplier paid \$231 more than if the customer was receiving their electricity from their utility company. The report found some low-income households lost more than \$541 by switching to a competitive supplier."

In the last three years, the AG's Office has received more than 700 complaints about competitive suppliers engaging in aggressive and deceptive tactics. Complaints include suppliers pretending to be a utility company to induce customers to turn over sensitive information; suppliers harassing customers with repeated calls or home visits; and door-to-door salespeople forcing their way into elderly customers' homes and refusing to leave without a signed contract.

If you think you or an older adult you know might be vulnerable to aggressive sales pitches, you can add your name to a "do not switch" list. That way, even if scammers convince you or a loved one to switch, the transaction will not actually take place. To add your name to National Grid's "Do Not Switch List" call: 800-322-3223. For Eversource, call: 1-877-659-6326

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Senior 
SAFE

It's August; I hope you are enjoying it. It's also Fair season in the hilltowns and beyond. Here are a few safety tips that will help make your fair experience great:

- Keep hydrated -- drink lots of water.
- Wear comfortable, slip resistant shoes.
- Watch out for uneven walking areas.
- Sit for a spell when you begin to feel tired or overheated.
- Dress for comfort and bring something warm to wear in the evening.

Have a good time and SAFE Fair Season!

--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.

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

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Out and About in August

Wed. August 22nd, 12:15pm
Patrick Callinan & Friends
Williamsburg Senior Center Cafe
141 Main St. Haydenville, MA

Lively entertainment by local musicians! Please call two days ahead to reserve lunch for \$3 if interested: 268-8407.

Thurs. August 30th, 7pm
Lonesome Brothers
Florence Music on the Porch series,
Park St. Florence, MA

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the music!

The Worthington Council on Aging office is in the process of moving to their new location, **2 Packard Park (Corner's Grocery Building)**. The mailing address is the same (PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098-0007) but the phone number for the office has not yet been determined. Please continue to use coordinator, Sandy Epperly's, home phone if you have any questions: 413-238-5584.

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.

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.

