

Plainfield Council on Aging

July 2021 Newsletter



Plainfield Council on Aging
Town Offices, 304 Main St.
Plainfield, MA 01070

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Covid-19 Update

You should get a COVID-19 vaccination card at your first vaccine appointment. If you did not receive one, contact the provider site where you got vaccinated or your state health department to find out how to get a card.

Do not share a photo of your COVID-19 vaccination card online or on social media. Scammers can use the content you post, like your date of birth, health care details, or other personal information to steal your identity. After you get your COVID-19 vaccine, **keep your vaccination card in a safe place.**

If someone contacts you to buy or sell you a vaccination card, it's a scam.

Free-of-charge, Staples will make a laminated vaccination card for you that fits easily in a wallet.

If you suspect COVID-19 health care fraud, report it online or call **800-HHS-TIPS (800-447-8477)**. TTY users can call 1-800-377-4950.

The Commonwealth's designation of close contact for COVID contact tracing is now changed to remove those individuals who are **outdoors** when near a COVID-19 positive person. At this time, contact tracing should continue for close contacts as indicated in the bullets below and at this link: www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#how-do-i-know-if-i-am-a-close-contact-of-someone-with-covid-19?

How do I know if I am in close contact of someone with COVID-19?

⇒ You are a close contact of a COVID-19 positive person if you were within 6 feet of them while indoors, for at least 15 minutes, while they were symptomatic or within the 48 hours before symptom onset.

⇒ You are also a close contact if you were within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes of someone while

indoors, who tested positive for COVID-19 in the 48 hours before their test was taken or anytime in the 10 days after the test.

⇒ According to CDC guidance, individuals are less likely to be exposed to COVID-19 during outdoor activities, even without the use of masks.

COA Monthly Social

Wednesday, June 9th was our first COA social held at the Alden Pavillion behind the Town Offices and the Hallockville Library. It was a bright, sunny morning, not too hot, with a slight breeze. The few of us that gathered enjoyed a wonderful time seeing each other for the first time in months without masks while catching up on each other's news. Coffee, tea, and The Old Creamery donuts were enjoyed by all.



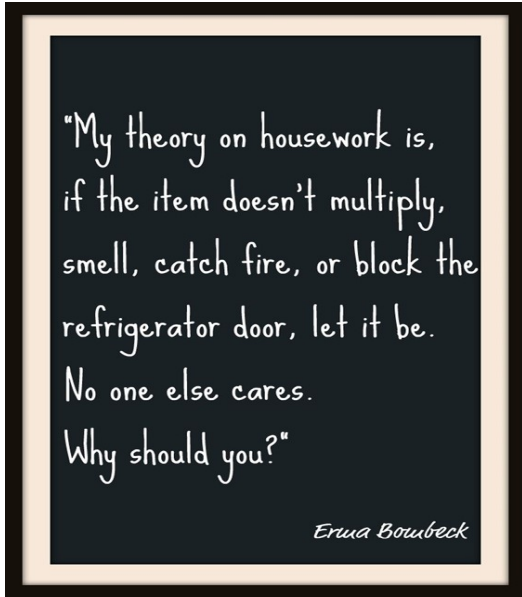
Standing, left to right:
Shirley Todd-Wood, David Honneus,
Susan Pearson, Alice Schertle,
Ana Arsenio-Dolan,
and seated: Allen Irvine, Ann Irvine, and
Tim Walter.
Susan Honneus, COA Coordinator, took the photo.

Getting Back To Normal

The municipal town buildings opened on June 15th much to the joy and relief of our residents. The Plainfield COA is hoping to resume our monthly luncheons once again. Please stay tuned for dates and time as we work out the details.

Plainfield Mutual Support Network

The Plainfield Mutual Support Network (PMSN) is ongoing and provides a framework for practical, financial, and emotional support to neighbors in need in the community. If you or someone you know is in need of support, you can still reach the Network by calling 634-1030. Leave a message and someone will return your call. You can also email plainfieldnetwork@gmail.com. PMSN is grateful for continued donations. These were helpful in providing food, wood, and gas during the pandemic's darker days.



At-Home Foot Care

Maria Stuart, RN, our Plainfield RN, is working for **Foot Care By Nurses** and is available for at-home foot care. FCBN has contracted with HVES to make this available to us. Maria will be happy to talk to anyone interested in her services. (413) 634-8856.

Medical Equipment Swap

The Plainfield COA has medical equipment available. The inventory includes: wheelchairs, walkers, crutches and canes, shower chairs, raised toilet seats and free standing commodes plus assorted splints and braces, pedal exercisers, bed guards, sock assists and trekking poles. Call Susan Pearson at 634-0025 for further information or to borrow some equipment.

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 and mail to Plainfield COA, 304 Main St. Plainfield, MA 01070)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Plainfield Council on Aging



Senior SAFE

Here comes the Fourth of July, released from most of the COVID restrictions! But along with July 4th celebrations are injuries from the use of fireworks. Every year children and adults are severely injured using illegal fireworks.

People of all ages lose fingers, hands and eyes because of the careless use of fireworks. Fireworks also cause structure and brush fires and keep firefighters, EMTS and police way too busy.

Even sparklers are very dangerous. Before putting one in the hands of your children or grandchildren, consider this: sparklers burn at 1200 degrees Fahrenheit. Water boils at 212 F, wood burns at 575 F, glass melts at 900 F. So don't put something that burns at 1200 degrees into the hands of anyone and risk severe 3rd degree burns or worse.

So, skip the trip out of state for purchasing fireworks that are illegal in our state; and enjoy the fireworks displays put on by licensed professionals.

Have a SAFE 4th,

--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.

Crabby Road

8-19-11



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

If so, please email Kristen at **regionalcoanews@gmail.com** to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

How DO they do it?

If you think of a scammer as being a professional – meaning that is what they do for an income, you can see why they get clever. How do they do what they do?

Well, there is the direct “just steal it” approach to assuming your identity. They lift your wallet and within half an hour make a new driver’s license and valid credit card. In my case, several years ago, they went to my credit union and took out \$5,000 in cash “for a funeral”. I filed a police report (so I wasn’t out any money) within an hour of knowing my wallet was gone, but the damage was done. They were never caught and my credit union was stiffed.

Then there is the “put together a puzzle” approach. They can steal your identify by assembling a puzzle. Say you post your birth date on social media, and then a photo saying here I am at my high school reunion! High school yearbooks are online for the reading. Scammers now probably know when and where your social security number was issued, and therefore can get your first five numbers.

“Games” on social media give them more clues, e.g., what was your first car, the name of your first pet? Where did you meet your spouse? These may be part of your various online security questions, giving the scammer more pieces of the puzzle.

The last four digits of your social security number are unique and random, which is why you really need to protect them. That may be the last piece of info the scammer needs to get you. Remember: they, he or she is a pro.

Carefully,

Jean O’Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

July's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth

I get a lot of questions from people saying they have trouble being able to afford their prescription drugs, so this month's good news is about possible ways to lower your costs, save money, or get your Rx free!

1. Let's talk about generic Rx. I refer to this as the "400 List" which is a list of about 400 generics the Walmart started offering about 10 years ago for \$4 a month or \$9 for a 90 day supply. Soon after Walmart began this program, Stop & Shop, Big Y, Price Chopper, Target, Walgreens, and most all major pharmacies began to do the same. NOTE: this does not lower your insurance co-pay, does not use your Rx insurance, but is a retail cost. You can check to see if your prescription is on the list, or ask your pharmacist.

2. Diabetes medication. Price Chopper and Walmart both have started programs to help patients who need diabetes medication. In addition, this year there were five Medicare D plans that drastically reduced the cost of some insulins. We expect this to continue. This option uses your Rx insurance and lowers the cost.

3. The Rx Outreach Program is a mail order program, not insurance. To qualify, your income must be less than \$47,960/ year, or less than \$67,640/ year if married. For more information, you can Google to learn what Rx are covered.

4. Good Rx Coupons are another option which you use instead of your insurance. You would need to Google to see what Rx have the largest discounts. It's a surprisingly extensive list.

5. Co-pay Foundations offer support for specific diseases that require expensive Rx.

6. Free Trial offers. Sometimes your doctor's office can give you free samples. Trial offers are also available from the drug manufacturer, especially for newer medications like Eliquis. Eliquis has a whopper co-pay if you are using your Medicare D plan insurance which most likely has a \$450 annual deductible. So initial refills of your medication can put a real crimp in your budget. Eliquis offers a free 30 day trial offer which you can download online.

7. Which brings us to Manufacturers Patient Assistance Programs. Bristol Myers-Squibb makes Eliquis. Their Patient Assistance Program will greatly reduce the cost if your income is less than \$38,640/ year or less than \$52,260/ year if married. You can download their application form online, provide income verification, have your doctor complete their portion and submit.

OK, that's 7 ways to reduce your cost.....how do you know that will work best for your situation? Thank heavens we have experts we can turn to for guidance.

The Pharmacy Outreach Program is a free information help line for Massachusetts residents. This is a non-profit program that I may have mentioned before in previous Good News columns. Run by the Massachusetts College of Pharmacies and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, they are available M-F 8-5 at 866-633-1617. They can help with applications for the Manufacturers Patient Assistance programs. They know the pharmaceutical manufacturers and can help you determine which program will help with your Rx cost.

Another information resource is Needy Meds which you can learn about online, or call at 800-503-6897.

I can't say enough about these two resources in their ability to help you sort through the maze of what's out there for your particular situation. The take-away today is: if your income is limited to the guidelines mentioned above (programs don't ask about assets) there is probably help available to reduce the cost of your Rx.

Need Help With Your Housing Repairs?

Hilltown CDC received funding for the FY20 Housing Rehab Program for the towns of **Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Peru, Plainfield, Williamsburg and Worthington**, and we're currently applying for the FY21 grant that may include the following communities: Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Peru, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. Homeowners who live in these towns are encouraged to apply now if you need help with your housing repairs.



Listed below is the work that can be performed under the Housing Rehab Program:

Siding ~ Roofs and Chimneys ~ Windows and Doors
~ Floor Joists ~ Flooring ~ Insulation
Walls ~ Ceilings ~ Handicap Accessibility Work
Septic Systems and Sewer Tie-in's ~ Plumbing and
Electrical Updates ~ Wells, Pumps, and Hot Water
Tanks ~ Porches, Decks, and Stairs ~
Lead Paint Removal ~ Asbestos Removal

These are **NO Interest/NO payment loans** which may be entirely forgiven, and all work is completed by a licensed contractor of your choice. Please don't delay, funding is available, and you may be surprised to find out you qualify! Please contact Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at **(413) 296-4536, ext. 123** or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org for an application.

Household Income Guidelines/Limits:

| Household Size | Maximum Gross Annual Income |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | \$47,850 |
| 2 | \$54,650 |
| 3 | \$61,500 |
| 4 | \$68,300 |
| 5 | \$73,800 |
| 6 | \$79,250 |
| 7 | \$84,700 |

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

On the Road Again..



Francine Frenier teams up with area COA Trip Planners

Here is a brief outline of future bus trips for 2021. Please know nothing is written in stone and things can change. Some trips are originating from the Southamptton Council on Aging, but Francine will be the contact person for all trips mentioned below. All trips include taxes and tips.

If you would like to share your email address with Francine so we can keep in touch, please send a short message to francine.frenier@gmail.com or call 413-296-4291. Please make your interest known 4-6 weeks prior to the trips so plans can be confirmed.

- ⇒ **October 8-18.** 11 day bus trip to **Colorado Springs**. Sit back & relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery. Activities almost every day. Many meals included. \$1,190 due 7/15. Only 6 seats left.
- ⇒ **July 27.** Visit **York Village**, southern gateway to Maine and stop at Nubble Lighthouse, Down East Clambake @ Fosters, shop at Kittery Outlets -\$94 due NOW.
- ⇒ **September TBD.** Big E, date to be determined, \$12 for Chesterfield residents, \$15 for out of towners. An interest list is needed prior to more planning. Please contact Francine by July 31. Door to door service, two pickup locations, no parking fee, driver tip included.
- ⇒ **August 17.** **Indian Princess Mississippi River Paddlewheel boat ride** on Lake Chaubunagungamaug in Webster, MA. Lunch choice aboard ship, shopping at Graf-ton Country Store - \$83.
- ⇒ **September 21.** Guided tour of **Quabbin Reservoir** & Lunch at Salem Cross Inn, shopping stop at Oakwood Farm Christmas Barn- \$67.
- ⇒ **October 19.** **Green Mountain Flyer Vermont** scenic fall train ride with lunch at New England House, stop at Vermont Country Store - \$90.
- ⇒ **November 4.** **Plymouth 400th Anniversary** program & Thanksgiving buffet luncheon \$133 *if paid in full by 9/30/21 Seating is limited.*
- ⇒ **December 9.** Pizza & Salad early dinner prior to tour of **Bright Nights**, Springfield, MA. Cost to be determined.



Save the Date:

Freida's Song

Meet the Author: Ellen Prentiss Campbell

Sunday, August 1st at 4pm

**Chesterfield Community Center
400 Main Rd.**

Ellen Prentiss Campbell is the author of the novel *The Bowl with Gold Seams* (2016, winner of the Indie Excellence Award for Historical Fiction) and the short story collections *Known By Heart* (2020) and *Contents Under Pressure* (2016, nominated for the National Book Award). Ellen spoke to us in 2016 about writing her first novel and will come to Chesterfield to talk about her new book.



Frieda's Song, a work of historical fiction, is inspired by the life of renowned psychiatrist Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. Fleeing Nazi Germany in 1935, she came to the Chestnut Lodge Sanatorium in Rockville, Maryland. She practiced there for the rest of her life, establishing the Lodge's reputation for innovative treatment of mental illness. Fromm-Reichmann lived next door to the hospital in her custom-built home, Frieda's Cottage, dying there under mysterious circumstances in 1957. The Lodge closed in 2001; several years later fire destroyed the abandoned hospital building. Frieda's Cottage survived. Campbell explores the dual mysteries of Frieda's death and the destruction of the Lodge. The novel spans seventy years and is told by Frieda; current-day psychotherapist Eliza Kline; and Eliza's teenage son Nick. The story explores the tension between love and work, the strength and limits of relationship, and what healers must do to heal themselves. Rich in detail of time and place, *Frieda's Song* is a dramatic tale of the way history and chance, and the work and people we love, shape our lives—and how the past is always present, haunting us.

Mark your calendars to join us on **Sunday, August 1, at 4PM** in welcoming Ellen to Chesterfield again. Light refreshments will be served. *Copies of Frieda's Song are available to borrow from The Chesterfield Public Library.*

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

General Contractors

Are you are interested in steady, local work?

Hilltown CDC is currently seeking General Contractors who are interested in bidding on Housing Rehabilitation projects funded by the Community Development Block Grant. We recently received funding for the FY20 Housing Rehab Program with an anticipated 18 projects. In addition, we're in the process of applying for the FY21 grant for another anticipated 18 projects.

Projects are planned in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Peru, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington with an average project cost of \$35,000.00 - \$40,000.00. Contractors working on Housing Rehab projects are guaranteed payment for all work with a quick turnaround on invoices as well as a steady source of local, year around work.

GC's must possess a valid Contractor Supervisor's License and a Home Improvement Contractor's License. Lead certification is preferred, but not required. General Liability coverage as well as Workmen's Compensation insurance (if applicable) is required.

**Last Chance:
Two ways to stretch your food budget**

Something for everyone: You can use the program by signing up for an affordable Hilltown Community Farm Share, use your SNAP, HIP, WIC, and Senior FMNP Coupons or pay on your own but still benefit from a sliding scale. It's also possible to purchase great veggies at regular, affordable prices and shop locally and support the program at the same time.

For more information, visit **hilltownmobilemarket.info** or contact **Seva Water** at **sevat@hilltowncdc.org** or **413-824-1840**

July 22-October 8, 2021

The **Hilltown Mobile Market** is back for a third season this summer and fall. Come and get your Hilltown-grown lettuce, squash, potatoes, peaches, and so much more! We welcome many forms of payment including cash, credit and debit. The market is supported by Healthy Hampshire, Hilltown Community Development and the Hilltown Community Health Center.

