

Plainfield Council on Aging

September 2021 Newsletter



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

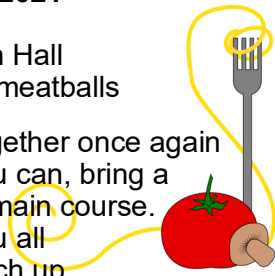
**Susan Metcalfe Honneus, COA Coordinator
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shonneus@town.plainfield.ma.us**

Save The Date!

The COA monthly luncheons are back!

When: **September 8, 2021**
Time: 12 Noon
Where: Plainfield Town Hall
Menu: Spaghetti and meatballs

We look forward to getting together once again for our COA luncheons. If you can, bring a side dish to complement our main course. We look forward to seeing you all once again where we can catch up with one another and enjoy a meal together.



Suggestions for COA Day Trips

There is a suggestion box at the kiosk in the Town Hall where you may put suggestions for day trips that you think we would all enjoy taking. All requests will be considered.

Exercise Classes

Joan Griswold is offering her Zoom classes once again on Mondays at 10am for Plainfield residents. Email Joan for the link: joan@bybhealth.com.

Regular physical activity can help us recover more quickly, heal more easily, and get an edge on all kinds of disease and injury. In fact, exercise may just be nature's best medicine. "There is no medication or nutritional supplement that even comes close to having all of the effects exercise does," says David C. Nieman, PhD, author of *The Exercise-Health Connection: How to Reduce Your Risk of Disease and Other Illnesses by Making Exercise Your Medicine*. "It's truly the best medicine we know of."



At-Home Foot Care

Maria Stuart, 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.

Plainfield Walkability Map

We will be meeting in September with Joan Griswold to create a walkability map for Plainfield. We will keep you updated on what we find out.

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, sox assists and trekking poles. Call Susan Pearson at 634-0025 for further information or to borrow some equipment. If there is something we do not have, Ashfield has additional equipment. Call Deb Scott at 413-628-4547 or email her at cbuilders95@yahoo.com

Available Food Information

Here is a good resource for food availability, food pantries, SNAP benefits:

www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-local-food-bank

You may also call Project Bread (Food source hotline) at (800) 645-8333 or at TTY: (800) 377-1292.

It's Easier Than You Think To Re-Energize

Stress and so many demands on our time can leave us feeling worn out. But there are so many ways to recharge. Take just five minutes for your-

self. (No one will mind!) Cross something off your to-do-list. (It can wait!) And most importantly, have some fun. (It's time. You deserve it!)

Mental Confusion In Seniors

What are the causes of mental confusion in the elderly?

The three most common causes are:

- ⇒ uncontrolled diabetes
- ⇒ urinary infection
- ⇒ "dehydration"

It may sound like a joke, but it isn't. People over 60 generally stop feeling thirsty and consequently stop drinking fluids. When no one is around to remind them to drink fluids, they quickly dehydrate. Dehydration is severe and affects the entire body. It may cause abrupt mental confusion, a drop in blood pressure, increased heart palpitations, angina (chest pain), coma and even death.

This habit of forgetting to drink fluids begins at age 60, when we have just over 50% of the water we should have in our bodies. People over 60 have a lower water reserve. This is part of the natural aging process. But there are more complications. Although they are dehydrated, they don't feel like drinking water, because their internal balance mechanisms don't work very well.

Conclusion:

People over 60 years old dehydrate easily, not only because they have a smaller water supply, but also because they do not feel the lack of water in the body. Although people over 60 may look healthy, the performance of reactions and chemical functions can damage their entire body.

So here are two alerts:

1) Get into the habit of drinking liquids. Liquids include water, juices, teas, coconut water, milk, soups, and water-rich fruits, such as watermelon, melon, peaches, and pineapple; oranges and tangerines also work. The important thing is that every two hours, you must drink some liquid. Remember this!

2) Alert for family members: constantly offer fluids to people over 60. At the same time, observe them. If you realize that they are rejecting liquids and, from one day to the next, they are irritable, breathless or display a lack of attention, these are almost certainly recurrent symptoms of dehydration.

EVERYTHING I KNOW I LEARNED FROM MY MOM:

My MOTHER taught me **RELIGION**:
You'd better pray that will come out of the carpet.

My MOTHER taught me **LOGIC**:
Because I said so, that's why.

My MOTHER taught me **FORESIGHT**:
Make sure you wear clean underwear in case you're in an accident.

My MOTHER taught me **IRONY**:
Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about.

My MOTHER taught me about **STAMINA**:
You sit there until all that spinach is gone.

My MOTHER taught me about **RECEIVING**:
You are going to get it when you get home.

My MOTHER taught me about **MEDICAL SCIENCE**:
If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to freeze that way.

My MOTHER taught me about JUSTICE...

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



Seniors Aware of Fire Education



September is here; and that means that the local schools are opening up, and with them, school buses will be on the road mornings and afternoons. Why do I bring this up in the Senior SAFE column?

Every week somewhere in our state people are driving past school buses with their red lights blinking; some people run through the amber warning lights on school buses like they do trying to beat getting caught in a red light. That is not you, is it?

'Tis the season to be on the lookout for the school buses that stop on the roads in your community. Ambulances and fire trucks are not allowed to pass a school bus showing its red lights. Kids' lives are at stake.

Have a SAFE end of summer.

--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

9-21-11



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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!

Passwords!

I did warn you last time this was coming... these irritating strings of letters and numbers and symbols are part of life that we didn't used to have to deal with, but, boy howdy, they are here now! And the more careful we are with them to be safe, the more work it is. Passwords and passcodes open our computer and phone and let us into our financial and life management web pages. It is tempting to use a simple password and always the same one, but that makes access to your information much easier for the hackers and scammers. What to do?

First, set up different passwords for different access, e.g., the bank has one and your insurance company has another, social media still another. Second, avoid the most obvious passwords such as any of your personal information, favorite pet, abc123, the word "Password". There are lists of the top 50 passwords to avoid. Hint – those lists are part of the computer program the scammers run to figure you out.

Third, add some difficulty for the schmuck trying to get into your accounts. One way is to use a sentence in abbreviated form. Example: Gmtvborc! MyPrahgia4s. Translation: Grandma made the very best oatmeal raisin cookies! My Parents raised a huge garden in all 4 seasons. Note to any scammer reading this – while these sentences are true for me, I am NOT using them as passwords!

There may be improved password management options for us in the future, but we need to be proactive now. Please check your passwords.

Still Again, Carefully,

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

September's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth

I think sometimes we forget that because we are Massachusetts residents, we have access to affordable health insurance. If you are under 65, not eligible for Medicare, and have limited income, then you can enroll in a subsidized health insurance plan through the Massachusetts Connector. If you are 65 or older, and eligible for Medicare, you can enroll in a Medicare plan that will cover our Rx, hospitalizations and other medical services.

Let's talk about the Connector. You can check this out online. Just Google: Massachusetts Health Connector. Connector plans monthly premium costs are on a sliding fee scale, pegged to your income. Eligibility requirements do not count assets. This has been particularly helpful this past year with several callers asking what they can do for insurance if they decide to quit working, or reduce their employment hours to the point where they wouldn't have insurance coverage. In Massachusetts, we do not have to wait until we are 65 to retire and get Medicare for health insurance. We can choose to give up our employment, check out the Connector Marketplace and enroll in a Connector plan. Because it's based on your earnings, your plan will be affordable. Check with your doctor's office to see which Connector plan they bill.

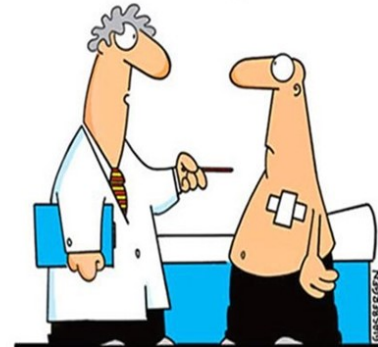
Let's talk about Medicare. If you are 65 or older, and have paid into social security for 40 quarters (10 years) you will be eligible for Medicare. If you are 65 or older and haven't paid into social security, but are married to someone who has, you will be eligible for Medicare through your spouse's work history. (Just like being eligible for a social security retirement benefit based on your spouses work history.)

Medicare pays for about 80% of your medical expenses, except for Rx. You are mandated to have Rx coverage. So if you are a veteran, you might get your Rx as part of your VA benefits. If you have a retirement pension that has Rx coverage, you're all set. But if not, you still have to have Rx coverage...so you can enroll in a Medicare D plan. The least expensive plan this year is \$7.20/month. There are 27 plans for our area, and all have different monthly premiums. A SHINE counselor can help you sort out which Medicare D plan works best for you, depending on what Rx you take.

But you can also enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan that enhances your Medicare benefits and also offers Rx coverage. There are Medicare Advantage plans that have a zero monthly premium. Doesn't get more affordable than that.

What's IMPORTANT here is that neither of these options, the Connector, or Medicare....count assets. So whether you are over 65, or not yet 65....as long as you are a Massachusetts resident, and you have limited income.....there's affordable health insurance for you.

A SHINE counselor can help you sort through the options. You can contact your senior center to find a SHINE counselor nearest you.



"It's a pacemaker for your heart.
Plus, you can download apps for your liver,
kidneys, lungs, and pancreas!"

September is Fall Prevention Awareness Month

6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every 11 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. Many falls are preventable. Stay safe with these tips!

- Find a good balance and exercise program to build balance, strength and flexibility. Contact your local senior center. Find a program you like and take a friend.
- Talk to your health care provider. Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.
- Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.
- Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses. Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.
- Keep your home safe. Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, install grab bars in key areas.
- Talk to your family members. Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a senior issue.

NCOA, National Council on Aging
To learn more, visit ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.

On the Road Again..



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

The Chesterfield COA is offering a \$20 refund on any non-sponsored Chesterfield trips listed here (*) to folks 60 years of age and older.

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.

- ⇒ **September 20.** Big E, \$12 for Chesterfield seniors age 60 and older, \$15 for other adults from Chesterfield and any other community. Free entertainment: Rainer Martin in ***The Donna Summer Experience***. Door to door service, 2 pickup locations COA & Elks Lots, no parking fee, driver tip included. Payment due now.
- ⇒ **September 21.** Guided tour of **Quabbin Reservoir** & Lunch at Salem Cross Inn, shopping stop at Oakwood Farm Christmas Barn- \$68 due now.* (Price correction).
- ⇒ **October 6.** Spend a day at **Mystic Seaport**. \$15 for Chesterfield seniors age 60 and older. \$25 for other adults from Chesterfield and any other community. Lunch on your own at onsite cafeteria. Fee for guided tour or boat rides not included. Payment due by September 17.
- ⇒ **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 **now**. Only 2 seats left.*
- ⇒ **November 4.** **Plymouth 400th Anniversary** program & Thanksgiving buffet luncheon \$133 *if paid in full by 9/30/21*. Seating is limited.*
- ⇒ **December 7.** **Nashville Christmas Show** & luncheon at the Log Cabin. Country Jambo-ree performs. **Self-drive**. \$25 for Chesterfield seniors age 60 and older. \$59 for other adults from Chesterfield and any other community. Payment due by November 1st.

- ⇒ **December 9.** Pizza & Salad late lunch prior to tour of **Bright Nights**, Springfield, MA. Cost to be determined.*

Chesterfield Council on Aging DAY TRIP A Visit to Mystic Seaport Museum and Nautical Village

Wednesday October 6, 2021



Chesterfield Seniors (age 60 or over) **\$15**

Other Chesterfield adults **\$25**

Open to adults from all communities for **\$25**
Vaccination Strongly Recommended/CDC Covid
Protocols at the time will be followed
No refunds due to bargain price
Seating is Limited to 30

**Trip includes round trip transportation,
entrance fee to the Seaport grounds,
driver gratuity. Other fees listed below.**

Join us at the Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut, the largest maritime museum in the U.S. for a private tour of the Restoration Shipyard to see antique wooden sea-going vessels under restoration. Wander the seaport on your own, enjoying the history and ambiance of an 1800s working seaport with more than 60 historic buildings. Sit on the common and listen to the Seaport Sea Shanty Singers belting out old sea shanties.

Watch the lowering of a whaleboat from the Charles Morgan, the oldest existing whaling ship in the world, and watch a crew maneuver the whaleboat. Observe a blacksmith working iron to create tools and artworks or tour vessels on site at the nautical village.

Take a sail on the Breck Marshall Catboat or go for a row on the antique classic rowing boat. There is something at Mystic Seaport for everyone to see and do.

Lunch on your own -- onsite cafeteria,
reasonable prices, many food choices

**Meet the Bus: 7AM COA parking lot
400 Main Rd. Chesterfield, Ma**

**2nd Pickup: 7:45AM Elks Parking Lot
17 Spring St. Florence, MA**

Arrive @ Mystic around 10AM

**Bus Leaves: 4PM Mystic Seaport with
expected return of 6:30PM**

For reservations: call Francine Frenier @ 296-4291
or call the COA @ 296-4007

Cash or checks payable to COA due
by **September 17.**

Plainfield Council on Aging
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Plainfield, MA 01070

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

Saturday, September 25th, 9-3pm

Fall / Winter Clothing Exchange

Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St., Goshen

Keep your family warm without spending a cent! Drop off your washed, gently-used men's, women's and children's fall/winter clothing and accessories at the church on Wednesday and Friday mornings (call Laura at 268-7005 to arrange a time), then come back to shop on Sat. the 25th from 9am-3pm! All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not.



"Please hold while we bring you the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach."

