

# Plainfield Council on Aging

## April 2022 Newsletter



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

### *April Luncheon*



**When:** **April 13, 2022**  
*(unless otherwise restricted by the Board of Health)*

**Time:** **12 noon**

**Where:** Plainfield Town Hall

**Menu:** To be decided. Check the next issue of the Plainfield Post.

Our March luncheon saw the luck of the Irish in full swing, minus the blarney. We all enjoyed being together in person once again.

### **Covid Vaccine Clinics - Pfizer (age 5+), Moderna, and J&J**

**\*\*Walk-ins Welcome\*\***

- Elks Lodge  
17 Spring Street in Florence  
Mondays 2-6pm  
Fridays 10am-2pm
- Thornes Marketplace  
150 Main Street in Northampton  
Thursdays 2-6pm  
Saturdays\* 12-3pm  
*\*March 12, 19, & 26*

### **Plainfield Walkability**

The Plainfield Walkability group is putting the finishing touches on the walkability map for our town. With warmer weather on its way, it will be wonderful to be able to get out and about again and what better way than on our own trails. Information

about distribution of the map will be forthcoming.

### **Foot Care Clinic**

The foot care clinic is up and running again with Piper Sagan every other month with the next one scheduled for **Tuesday, May 10th** at the Community House in Cummington. Slots from 11 a.m. on into the afternoon are still available. Cost is \$50 per person. Masks are required.

Please contact Chris at [croumeliotis@cummington.ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington.ma.gov) or call to leave a message at 634-2262 for any questions.

### **Technology Day – Bring Your Device Event**

**Who:** Anyone interested in learning more about their handheld device!

**What:** One on One training on how to use your handheld device!

**When:** Saturday, April 30th from 9am – 1pm

**Where:** Meekins Library, Williamsburg, MA

**How:** Bring your device. Volunteers will be available to answer your questions.

**Why:** To enhance our lives by using technology. There has been an ongoing discussion recently about a lack of access and knowledge when using smart phones, computers, email, tablets, etc. It appears that older adults have had fewer resources during the pandemic due to little or no use with technology. This gap is sometimes referred to as the “Digital Divide.”

Our aim is to help folks have more options available:

Something came up and you can't make it to your doctor's appointment?  
How to set up a telehealth visit!

Missed a deadline paying your bill? Avoid a late charge and pay online! No stamps necessary!

How do I answer the phone?

Is this thing on or not working?

How do I take a picture?

Can't see your grandchildren?

Visit them on Skype or Face Time!

Communicate by email.

Read books!

And much, much more. Please call 413.268.8410 or email (seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org) the Senior Center with any questions. We look forward to seeing you.

**Is this COA Newsletter important to you? Let us know!**

The newsletter is funded by the Service Incentive Grant (SIG) from Massachusetts and managed by the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs of which the Plainfield COA is a member. SIG has funded the newsletter for over six years and the Consortium has managed its logistics for all seven Hilltowns— designing, printing and mailing it to your home complete with a regional section linking each of our towns. As each fiscal year comes to an end on June 30th, we need to continue to communicate the value of the newsletter to our funders. You are the most uniquely positioned to express that value. Has the newsletter been important to you over the years -- particularly during the isolation and stress of the pandemic? If so, would you be willing to write a brief testimonial on its significance? If so, please contact the Plainfield COA, 304 Main Road, Plainfield, MA 01070. Thank you in advance.

**Want to giggle and play with the grandkids (or friends)? Old and corny jokes are always new to someone.**

What do you call a rabbit with fleas? Bugs Bunny.

What do you get when you pour hot water into a rabbit hole? Hot cross bunnies.

What did the Easter Bunny say to the carrot? Nice gnawing you.

What do you get if you give an Easter Bunny a pair of socks? A sock hop!

How does an Easter Bunny keep his fur looking so good? Hare spray.

Why was the Easter Bunny so sad? He was having a bad hare day.



***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

There is a common misconception that falling is an expected part of the experience of getting older. This is not true. Falls are preventable. Here are some things you can do or be mindful of that reduce the risk of falling:

- ⇒ Stay active. Regular exercise improves leg muscle and balance. Ask your health care provider which type of exercise is the best for you. Check in with your local COA to find what programs are available.
- ⇒ Make your home safer. Get rid of clutter on the floor. Improve lighting in places like stairs and hallways. Get rid of scatter rugs or secure them with double sided-tape. Have handrails on all staircases. Install grab irons in the bathroom and use non-slip mats in your tub and shower.
- ⇒ Have your vision, hearing and feet checked yearly and be aware of what medications make you feel sleepy or dizzy. Wear shoes with non-skid soles and don't shuffle but pick up your feet when walking.

Have a fall free spring!

--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.*



*So I lay them and you get all the credit?*

**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!

### **It shouldn't be so hard...**

I got a note the other day about a reader's experience in dealing with Medicaid as her mother was ill and, as it turns out, dying. It was a mess! So I don't know the solutions but decided to pass on the cautions she sent me. We will call her Sal and give an abbreviated version of what happened.

Sal's mother was in rehab and Sal was trying to get her into a long-term care bed and approved for Medicaid. Her mother was finally approved but died the next day. No Medicaid card or number ever arrived. The program has a burial fund, see: **[www.mass.gov/service-details/who-can-apply-for-funeral-and-burial-payment-assistance](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/who-can-apply-for-funeral-and-burial-payment-assistance)** for information. In Sal's case, the fund was set up at a bank with only the mother's name and no beneficiary. There was a paperwork issue that took coordination between the state and the bank. The bank did not share with Sal some of the requirements for using the account. Between these matters and all the other items you can imagine (the rest home, medical bills, insurance, never mind her mother's well-being), things were very hard.

Lessons learned:

- do everything you can ahead of time (my favorite Big Five and related documents),
- check that real estate and bank accounts are in the ownership that you want,
- remember that even people in official positions can make mistakes,
- make written notes after a conversation with the bank, insurance, funeral home, attorney, Medicare/Medicaid, including the date and person talked to,
- think about what you heard and if there is an inconsistency or something just feels "off", follow up on it,
- AND at the end of each conversation, ask "What else should I know or ask you?"

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

## April's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Maybe you remember years past when we were encouraged to collect our "emergency information" and fill out a "File of Life" card which came with a magnetized pocket so it could be hung on your refrigerator?

You might ask at your Senior Center to see if they have any of these File of Life pockets available, but even if they don't, you can make your own.

Here's why it's important: when we are in a stressful situation, like a health emergency, some of us get that shot of adrenalin and become amazing at getting 911 resources in place, and dealing with ER admissions information, but most of us are not amazing.... we get a "stress dementia" where we can't recall our health insurance numbers, sometimes our phone information, or list of Rx or medical conditions.

You don't have to worry about remembering important information like Rx allergies, or various doctor's names and phone contact information if you write it all down on an Emergency Information Sheet.

It should list: your name, date of birth, your health insurance numbers, your primary doctor's name and address. Then a list of your medical conditions and Rx that you take (which would include any allergies). Your emergency sheet should also include your Health Care Proxy, and family member's contact information.

Several years ago, I was the chauffeur for my sister who had a detached retina and needed several appointments in Burlington, MA for surgery. Each time we went to check in, the receptionist asked her the same questions: name, address, phone and health insurance information. As my sister became more distressed about her loss of vision, she had more difficulty answering what appeared to be simple questions. So we wrote down all the answers to questions ahead of time, and just gave the card to the receptionist. Whew....sigh of relief. Another time my Mom fell and set off her Lifeline. I got the call at work from the Lifeline folks, met the ambulance at the ER, and there was my Mom, on the stretcher with her File of Life information clutched in her hands. I just handed it off to the admission folks and was able to stay with her as she got processed in the ER for admission. She didn't have to wait alone, waiting for me to get admission because all the necessary information was on the File of Life card.

You can make your own Emergency Sheet of In-

formation. And you can carry it in your wallet. Might save you considerable stress when you need it?



## POLKA PALOOZA

IN HONOR OF

**RUSS  
RICHARDSON**



**FEATURING**

**THE EDDIE FORMAN BAND**

**SATURDAY APRIL 2, 2022  
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

**POLKA DANCING, FOOD & FUN**

CASH BAR, DONATIONS AT THE DOOR WELCOME

American Legion Post 236  
5 Bridge Street  
Haydenville, MA 01039

## On the Road Again...

### 2022 Trip Lineup

Listed are the bus trip destinations with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Chesterfield COA and *Friends of Northampton Senior Center* are helping with the cost of some trips. Contact Francine Frenier if interested or want more information by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.



### Updates on the following:

**Multi Day May 2-5 Lancaster, PA Sight & Sound Theater presents David.** 4 days. \$485, due by **April 4, 2022.** Flyer available. Dates and price change.

### Taking interest lists on the following:

**Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band** at AquaTurf in Plantsville, CT. Includes chicken & salmon lunch. Cost \$113, **due by 4/18/22.** Flyer available.

**Day Trip. Encore Boston Harbor Casino.** Postponed until June 2022.

**Day Trip Aug 10. The Jersey Tenors,** a musical tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost \$114, \$10 discount if paid by 6/30/22. Flyer Available.

**Multi Day Aug 15-17. Kennebunkport & Portland Maine Coastal Tour.** 3 days. Cost \$359, \$25 discount if paid by 5/8/2022. Flyer available.

**Multi Day Oct 14-23. Nashville, Memphis & Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—**10 days. \$1,205, \$25 discount if paid by 7/2/22. Flyer available. A few seats remain.

**Day Trip July/August. Worcester, MA Red Sox Triple A affiliate team, Woo Sox game.**

**Day Trip September 9. Thomaston, Connecticut. Naugy Scenic Train Ride.**

**Day Trip Sept. The Big E**

**Day Trip Late Sept/Early Oct. Wareham, MA. Cranberry Bog Tour.**

**Day Trip Oct 4. Octoberfest! The Schnitnel Brothers** perform. Self Drive to the Log Cabin. Meal choice and Cost to be determined.

## What's in a word?

Every month over 2000 COA newsletters go out to the households of older adults in the seven northern hilltowns. Each town receives both local and regional sections that include news, trips, events, health information, access to benefits, tips from Jean O'Neil on how to protect yourself from scams and other risky shenanigans, fire safety facts from Worth Noyes, Good News from Deb Hollingworth about how to get what you want when you need it and a host of other important topics that help people stay in their own homes and live as independently as possible.



A grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs has made all of this possible. It's been a vital and concrete way to help those living in small, rural towns. It's helped us join the national AARP Age Friendly Communities.

This grant has enabled us to keep the written word alive and provide the kind of critical communication that is of such high priority to everyone; and, it actually comes to your doorstep or post office. **This grant is set to end on June 30th. At that time the written word in the newsletter will stop coming.**

It seems ironic to be talking about loss of the written word as everything shifts toward living in the digital age. I can see why some of our local and national newspapers are struggling. Oddly, they are struggling because people have moved to the virtual world; we're struggling because so many people in our rural communities have limited access to the virtual world. Many don't have broadband, some can't afford the costs of having broadband connections and many simply cannot afford to buy a computer.

To make the severity of the problem even worse, our newsletter has provided the major tool we have had to reduce isolation, connect people to the information they want and need and build regional networks that allow us to stretch and share our resources.

We are working hard to develop options that will support the survival of this service. **If you would miss this newsletter, please help by telling us how the newsletter fits into your life and why you would hate to lose it. We're planning to prevent this, down to the last word.**

**Please contact your COA NOW!**

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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 183  
Greenfield MA

### **Plainfield COA**

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

# **CHARITY SCAM**

You get a call from a charity looking for donations. Scammers try to fool you into giving money using these tactics:

- They rush you into making a donation;
- They use names that sound like a real charity;
- They change the caller ID to make you think it's a local caller.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE SURE THE MONEY IS GOING TO A GOOD CAUSE?**

- Research the charity before donating;
- Verify that the organization is registered with the MA Attorney General's Office;
- Look up the charity online & read what others are saying about it.



**If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit:**

Greenfield (413) 774-3186  
Northampton (413) 586-9225



Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General